MEXICO

from CORTES *to* CARRANZA

LOUIS S. HASBROUCK

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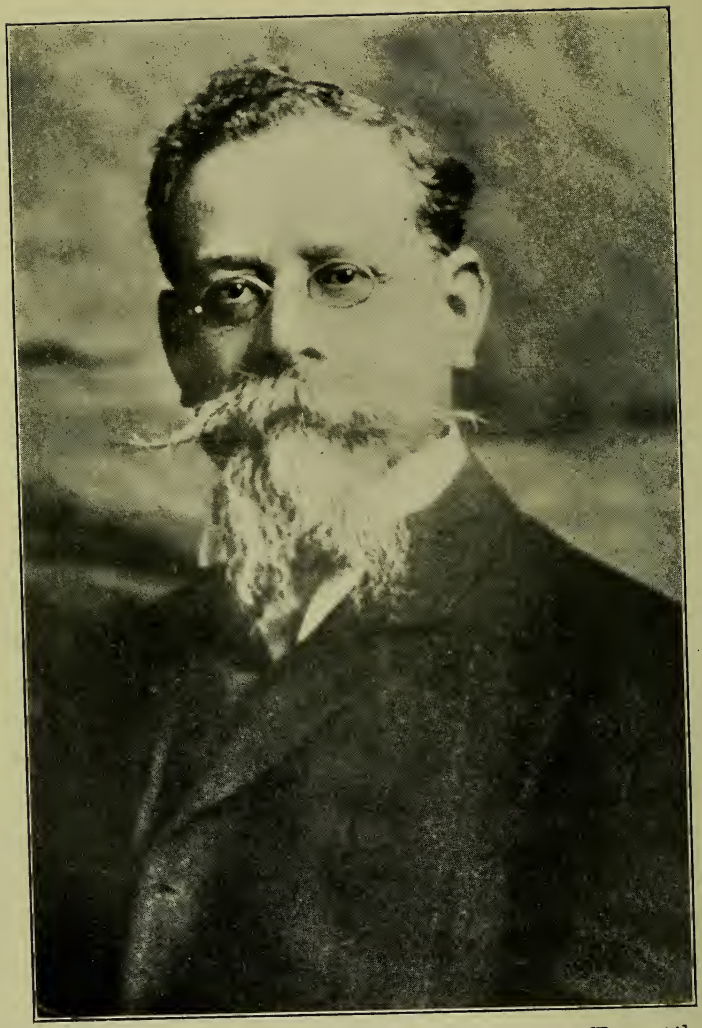

VENUSTIANO CARRANZA. [Page 314]

MEXICO

FROM CORTES TO CARRANZA

BY

LOUISE S. HASBROUCK

ILLUSTRATED

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"Hernando Cortes," by Sir Arthur Helps. (Putnam, 1871.)

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"Insurgent Mexico," by John Reed. (Appleton, 1914.)

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L. S. Hasbrouck.

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MEXICO

FROM CORTES TO CARRANZA

CHAPTER I

MYTHS AND MONUMENTS OF ANCIENT MEXICO

For centuries upon centuries Mexico, that great unquiet land to the south of us, has been the home of more or less civilized peoples. There was luxury and refinement there at the time Columbus sailed the seas. There are ruins of great buildings there to-day whose origin is more mysterious than that of the Pyramids of Egypt. There are stories of races who grew great and perished, no one knows when nor how. All that is left to us of Mexican history before the Spanish Conquest are a few names, a few guesses, a few "picture-writings," and these stories. We shall hear some of the latter.

On the great table-land of Mexico, with its healthful, temperate climate, a succession of shadowy early peoples fought with each other for supremacy. The defeated ones passed on, usually to the hot and humid Gulf Coast or to Yucatan and Central and South America. The first of these that we hear of was a race of

giants, the Quinames. These fell before the Xicalancans, "People of the Land of Pumpkins," and the Ulmecas, "People of the Rubber Lands," who in turn left the plateau and settled on the Gulf.

After them came the mysterious Mayas, whose descendants live in Yucatan to-day. They are said to be responsible for the ruins of the dead cities buried in the jungles of Yucatan—the ruins whose walls, built of great blocks of stone and covered with rich and intricate carvings, are the delight and despair of explorers, who try to reconstruct from them a long-vanished civilization.

Then came a ruder race, the Otomis, who at one time peopled the whole Mexican plateau, and whose descendants still live on the plateau of Guanajuato and Queretaro. And last came the Nahuas, who made history.

Who were these Nahuas, the not very far-back ancestors of the highly civilized Indians whom the Spanish conquered? Where did they come from, and how did they gain their civilization, equal in many respects to that of their conquerors? This is a subject which we seem to know less about, the more we study it! A great student of these matters, Lord Kingsborough, went insane after writing nine large volumes on early Mexican history; while another scholar, after twenty-five years of study, admitted that he was still in doubt of almost everything! Not many years after the Conquest there were more than forty theories as to who

these Indians were. Now, after several hundred years of study, the experts have reduced the list considerably.

Away up in British Columbia, there lives to-day a group of Indian tribes called the Haidah. If you are ever in New York and visit, as you surely will, the American Museum of Natural History, you will see their totem poles, war-canoes, baskets, and pottery, with, perhaps, a reproduction of a whole Haidah family in and about a wigwam.

These Indians have a peculiar sort of sculpture, and distinctive religious beliefs, which indicate a very ancient history. One of their principal gods, called different names by different tribes, is the "Man of the Sun," who descended from the sun in the shape of a bird and became a man to teach the people civilization.

A similar god, under a different name, was worshiped by the Indians on the Mexican plateau centuries before the coming of white men. He was Quetzalcoatl, the "Fair God," who had sailed away towards the East, and whose return, or that of his descendants, was dreaded by the Emperor Montezuma.

When we look at the art-forms, the carved totem-poles, pottery, etc., of these British Columbian Indians, we see a striking resemblance to the sculpture of the ancient Mexicans. These things lead some scientists to believe that the Aztecs, or Mexicans, who gave the Mexican plateau its name, and who lived there at the time of the Spanish conquest, came originally from

the Far North. But where they came from before then, nobody knows. Perhaps from Asia, the cradle of the human race, by way of Behring Strait, then possibly dry land. There is something decidedly Asiatic in the appearance and customs of the Mexican Indians. One thing must be remembered, they are of a totally different stock from the "Red Men" or North American Indians.

This theory that the Nahuas came from the north agrees with their own stories. They think that they came to Mexico by way of the "Land of Sand." (Perhaps the Great American Desert?) The Mexicans in particular reached Mexico, they say, from a legendary land called "Aztlan," by way of "Tlapallan," the "Place of Bright Colors," a seacoast country. (California?)

The first of the Nahua tribes to settle on the Mexican plateau was the Toltecs. Their capital was supposed to have been Tollan, near the present town of Tula. Certainly there are at Tollan ruins of extensive buildings which must have been built by some people, and why not the Toltecs, whose name means "builders"?

These Toltecs, according to the stories, were strong, well-built people, of a lighter complexion than most Indians, and with scanty beards. They were gentle-mannered, intelligent, loyal, swift runners, brave, and cruel in war. They understood agriculture, studied the stars and regulated their time and calendar by them, used plants for medicine, and were very artistic, as was

shown by the beautiful jewelry they made of gold and silver and precious stones, and their attractive garments of cotton and other fabrics.

These gentle Indians thought that they owed their knowledge of all these things to Quetzalcoatl, the Fair God, the tall white man who came from the East, as some of their legends say, or who descended from the sun in the form of a bird, as others have it. It may be that he was a European, drifted somehow to their shores. He stayed with the Toltecs twenty years, and during that time, they declared, flowers and fruit grew without cultivation, the cotton turned blue, yellow and red in the pod, the air was sweet with perfumes and filled with the songs of birds. And there was peace and good-will in the land, for every man loved his neighbor. It was the Golden Age of the Toltecs, but, alas, too short. Quetzalcoatl left the city of Cholula, which he had made his headquarters, and said good-by to the land of the Toltecs. He descended the steep slope to the Gulf of Mexico and sailed away upon a raft of serpent skins, to the unknown land of Tlalpalla. But before he left he told his sorrowing followers that one day his descendants, white men with full beards, like his, would come to them and teach them.

Beliefs make history. Who the Fair God really was, or whether he ever existed, we do not know; but we do know that the belief in him was the main thing which helped a mere handful of Spaniards to conquer a vast

number of Mexicans and overthrow their civilization, and therefore it is important to remember.

It is said that one of the Toltec queens first discovered how to make an intoxicating drink out of the maguey, that stiff, tinny-looking plant which looms so large in Mexican history. Its leaves were used for paper, and as a thatch for houses, its fibers for thread, its thorns for pins and needles, its roots for food; and as if this were not enough, Xochitl must needs make it into a hurtful drink. As a result, the nation began to deteriorate, and the Chichimecs, a fierce neighboring tribe, found it easy to invade their land and overwhelm them. This was about 1116 A. D. The Toltec kingdom is supposed to have lasted about four hundred years. The Chichimecs adopted the civilization of the Toltecs and overran the territory of a large part of present Mexico, including the states of Morelos and Puebla, a part of Vera Cruz, the greater part of Hidalgo, the whole of Tlascalla, and the Valley of Mexico. In the thirteenth century they moved their capital from Tollan to Texcuco, named from Lake Texcuco, on which the City of Mexico now stands.

They had to fight for their possession of this disputed plateau. Immigration from the north was still going on, and other tribes of the Nahua family were settling in the neighborhood. Two main bodies of these tribes were the Aculhuaques and the Tepanecs, who each founded pueblos (villages) on the lake. An-

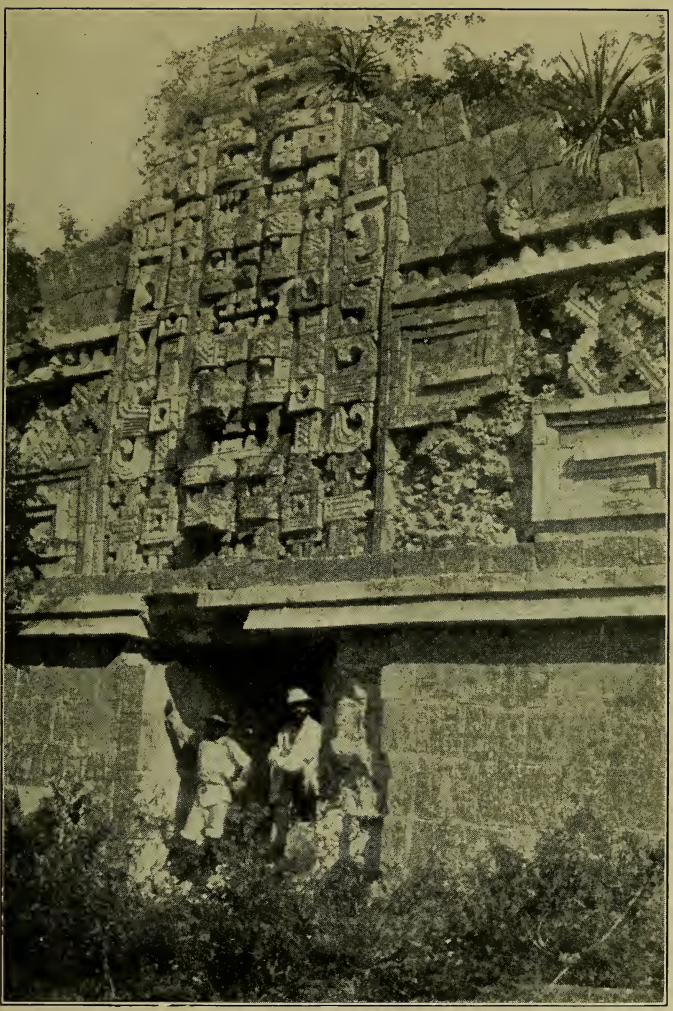
other was a miserable little wandering tribe, homeless, squalid, and bloodthirsty, wearing patches of gum and feathers upon their ears and foreheads, who arrived on the border of Lake Texcuco after the other two mentioned, and were bitterly despised by them. They settled first upon the hill of Chapultepec, high above the lake, with a spring of clear water—a too-desirable spot, from which they were soon driven out by the Chichimecs and Tepanecs. The newcomers took refuge then upon some islands in the lake of Texcuco. Here they built themselves frail huts of reeds and rushes, lived on a meager diet of fish and insects, and served their neighbors as slaves. These despised and humble creatures were no other than the Aztecs, or Mexicans, who were to become the rulers of the entire valley.

According to their own legends, the Aztecs had been wandering from their ancient home for about six hundred years, stopping here and there to settle for a time, and build houses and temples. Each time they moved, their priests directed them when and where to go. Finally they reached the Mexican plateau. They liked the appearance of the great oval plain, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, and carrying the great Lake of Texcuco like a jewel in its bosom. Their priests commanded them to stop at Chapultepec. Driven out from there, they huddled on the lake islands until they should be able to gain something better. Their name Aztec, meaning "Crane People," was

given them by the Tepanecs, perhaps because they lived like cranes in the marshes; their name of Mexicans they had given themselves from the name of their war-god, Mexitli.

Soon the Tepanecs, the neighboring lake-tribe, realized that the "Crane People" could fight. They helped the Tepanecs in their perpetual war against the Chichimecs with great success. But the Tepanecs, instead of being grateful, were jealous, especially since the Aztecs now refused to pay tribute, and demanded permission to build an aqueduct to the main land, ostensibly to carry water, but really, the Tepanecs feared, for purposes of invasion. The Tepanecs refused them permission to build it, and, moreover, stopped trading with them. This was a great blow to the Crane People, who depended upon trading their fish and game for wood, stone and other necessities which the Tepanecs could furnish them. The Tepanecs, to punish still further these rebellious slaves, caused the chief of one of their villages to be assassinated, and the other chief to be captured.

The Crane People rose as one man. Another chief, Izcohuatl, with thirteen captains, led his people to a great battle in which the Tepanecs were utterly defeated, with great slaughter. The Tepanec capital passed into the hands of the Aztecs. This was in or about the year 1428. Izcohuatl and the thirteen captains are still remembered as heroes in Mexican history.



THE HOUSE OF THE NUNS AT UXMAL.

The sun had now fairly risen upon the Aztecs, and the day of their power was to be dazzling to the last degree. Three kings followed, all brothers of each other and of the first king. Each was more warlike, enterprising and cruel than the last. There is no especial need for us nowadays to distinguish between them, or even to remember their long names. It is enough to know that under their reign, Mexican merchants penetrated farther into the country and Mexican armies conquered ever more widely. Finally, with a few exceptions, all the country east to the Gulf and west to Michoacan, south to Yucatan and north nearly as far as what is now Texas came under the influence of the former insect-eaters. The exceptions are worth noticing. They were the districts of Cholula and Tlascalla, between the coast and the capital. Upon the people of these places the Mexicans were in the habit of making bloody wars in order to obtain victims to sacrifice to their war-gods. When the Spaniards came, they found these little mountain republics full of warriors eager to avenge themselves on the Aztecs.

The conquering Mexicans on their plateau supplied themselves with everything that they needed, with the help of the tribes under their influence. From those near the Gulf they got raw cotton, which they made into beautiful garments, fresh fish (it is said that swift runners brought fish from the coast to Montezuma every twenty-four hours); from others, gold and precious

stones for their jewelry; from others, building materials and so on. Thus their homes and lives grew ever more comfortable and luxurious.

Under the successive reigns of the three brothers, the great temple or teocalli to Huitzilopochtli the war-god was built, causeways were constructed from the island to the main land, and dikes built to prevent the city from being flooded by the waters of the lake in rainy seasons.

In 1503, Montezuma II came to the throne—a humble-minded priest, apparently, sweeping down the stairs in the great temple when they summoned him to the kingship. Under his reign Mexico was to reach its greatest magnificence and its downfall.

We have read this brief story of the history previous to Montezuma. Let us do what is more interesting, go back and live for a time in the beautiful city of the Aztecs.

CHAPTER II

A CHILD IN THE AZTEC CAPITAL

If any Mexican child wished to know the meaning of the long name of the principal city of the country, Tenochtitlan, he was told the following story.

When the Aztecs first arrived in the lake region, about one hundred years before the coming of Montezuma II to the throne, they were told by their priests that the War-god, Huitzilopochtli, had decreed that they should found a city, on a spot to be indicated as follows. They should see a nopal, a kind of cactus, growing from a rock, and sitting upon it an eagle, with a snake in its beak. On the shore of Lake Texcuco the Aztecs suddenly came upon this very combination of objects. To make things doubly sure, a priest straightway dived into a pool to ask Tlaloc, the god of the waters, if they might build there. So, according to the legend, was the city begun; and its very name, Tenochtitlan, signifies, the Place of the Stone and the Nopal. An eagle perched upon a cactus with a snake in its mouth formed the coat-of-arms of the old Mexican

kings, and upon the Mexican flag to-day is the same emblem.

According to modern ideas, the War-god did not use very good judgment in his choice of a site, for the ground under Tenochtitlan is low and marshy. But this led to an arrangement picturesque and interesting, if not entirely convenient. Canals were cut by these enterprising Aztecs through the islands and marshes, to serve instead of streets, and traffic was carried on in canoes, which darted to and fro as unconcernedly, and far more quietly and gracefully, than the automobiles in our streets. Many of the canals had basins and locks for retaining the waters, and were spanned by bridges which could be drawn up at will in case of attack by an enemy.

A child of this old Aztec city, given a ride in one of these jolly canoes, which were made of hollow logs, would pass between shining silvery houses, raised on terraces from the watery street. The open doors of these houses would give glimpses of delightful court-gardens, where fountains cooled the air, flowers nodded their bright heads, and families gathered to enjoy their leisure hours. Around the court, in the houses of the well-to-do, were large, airy rooms, with hard, smooth cement floors, and walls covered with cotton and featherwork tapestries in brilliant colors. There was little furniture in these rooms—only mats and cushions of furs, cotton and palm-leaves, which served as beds

and couches, some low wooden benches and tables, and bamboo screens, which took the place of doors. From the open doors came perhaps to the nose of our little Aztec the odor of sweet incense, the gum called copal burned in earthen braziers filled with hot coals.

These houses were made of large hewn stones held together with cement, the whole surface covered with a sort of plaster which glistened in the sun. The poorer people had houses made of adobe or reeds mixed with mud, also coated with plaster, and built on the same general plan as those of the rich, with an open court in the center, which might thriftily be used as a vegetable garden, and a roof thatched with long grass.

Let us imagine such a child, and what else he would see if he came from some village in the country to visit in Tenochtitlan. And since even an imaginary boy must have a name, we will give him the name Axayacatl, after one of the old Mexican kings, and call him Axa for short! [1]

"What a crowd!" Axa exclaims, as they approach the market; and indeed, the great square, with its countless booths, is thronged with so many people that they make a noise like a huge hive of bees, which can be heard for some miles away. Yet there is perfect order. The people are dark-skinned, gentle-voiced,

[1] The details concerning Aztec life and social customs contained in this and the following chapter are drawn mainly from the interesting account of these matters given in Hubert Howe Bancroft's "History of Mexico."

with agreeable, cheerful manners. Men and women are dressed much alike, in loose, flowing, colored cotton garments, with ornamental borders, or decorated with birds' feathers laid closely one upon the other in elaborate designs. Over these are thrown garments of rabbits' fur or other small skins when the weather is cool. The hair of the women hangs loosely upon their shoulders, as the hair of Mexican women does to-day. And everywhere there are flowers: wreaths on the dark heads, fresh, fragrant masses of them on the booths. From the dawn of their history the Mexicans have been flower-lovers.

Axa wanders in and out among the booths, filled with curiosity about the different strange and delightful wares. There are merchants keeping close guard over piles of gold and silver ornaments, little ducks, lizards, and all sorts of birds and animals and natural objects, often set with glittering jewels, especially a stone the color of an emerald, called by the Aztecs *chalchuite,* and now known as a kind of jade. A more useful booth displays cups and painted pitchers of wood; another, pottery bowls, platters and water-bottles, very like the ones made in Mexico to-day; another, ropes and sandals made from nequen; another, paper made from maguey fiber. Pungent odors call attention to the wares of the merchant who sells dried herbs for medicine and cooking. The incense booth also proclaims itself. The heap of bright red powder there

is cochineal, made from dried insects, and used in dyeing; there are species of dye-woods also for sale at this table.

And the food! Axa's mouth waters as he looks at the various eatables for sale. Game and poultry (turkeys, ducks, rabbits, hares, deer and dogs), glistening scaly fish caught in the Gulf waters less than twenty-four hours before, lake fish also, dried fish, frogs, beans, tomatoes, red and green peppers, turkey eggs and turtle eggs, shrimps; piles upon piles of hot tortillas (corn cakes) all ready to eat, also various kinds of bread made of maize flour and eggs. To eat with them, honey and sweetmeats.

Not so nice to look at and not at all nice to smell are masses of a dark, powdery substance, dried ants and maguey flies, of which cakes are made. The Aztecs probably formed a taste for this food when the enmity of the neighboring tribes prevented their getting anything to eat but the fish and insects of the lake. Another delicacy dating from this period of their history is a kind of bread made from the mud or slime from the lake, which tastes like cheese. There are also seeds of the wild amaranth, tule (bullrush) roots and cooked maguey roots.

It would take too long to tell of all the articles which Axa sees in this market of long ago, but one more item of merchandise may be mentioned—the slaves, usually

war-captives, who are exhibited, with ropes around their necks, to prospective buyers.

Half of the fun of the market for Axa is the trading. There are disputes about prices, but these are seldom serious, for the Aztecs are not quarrelsome. Besides, there are policemen to preserve order. No coins are used, but instead, one kind of goods may be traded for another, or payment is made in grains of cacao, which are counted out in great numbers. When the piles of cacao become too large, pieces of tin shaped like the letter T are used instead. They have no value in themselves, but represent a certain amount of cacao. Sometimes, for very valuable purchases, gold-dust contained in transparent goose-quills is paid over.

After a while Axa has had enough of the market, and tells the servant who has accompanied him to town that he is going for a walk about the city. All the streets of this Tenochtitlan are not water streets, but some are smooth cement avenues, wide and lined with trees. Following one of these, Axa comes soon upon a beautiful park, whose shady walks wind between rare trees, shrubs and flowering plants from all parts of Montezuma's kingdom, and whose lawns are interspersed with both fresh and salt water ponds, filled with all kinds of water fowl of every shade of plumage. But what excites Axa even more than these are the sounds which come from a large group of buildings well within the park—roars and chatterings, bird-calls

and snake-hisses. It is the menagerie or "Zoo" where Montezuma keeps all the fauna of Mexico.

A particularly ferocious roar draws him to the open court, with low wooden cages, in which pace the tigers, jackals, foxes and other wild beasts of the Mexican mountains and plains. Keepers are feeding these with raw meat. After watching them gulp their dinner, Axa descends to a subterranean chamber, roofed partly with slabs of stone and partly with wooden gratings, where are kept the birds of prey. Five hundred turkeys are killed every day to provide them with food. In a great hall upstairs are the songsters, beautiful little birds of all colors. One species of bird about as large as a sparrow shows in its plumage five distinct colors, green, red, white, yellow and blue. Then there are bright green *quezales,* whose feathers are much used for decorative purposes, and gorgeous parrots. Here and there among the live songsters are birds of gold or silver, wrought very carefully and exactly in correct imitation of rare birds which it had been impossible to obtain alive for the aviary.

At a safe distance are the long cages housing the snakes. One is filled entirely with rattlesnakes, which are fed on fresh meat, dog-meat, and, alas, human sacrifices from the temples.

After looking at these, Axa goes to the arsenal, where he sees the terrible double-edged swords of obsidian, volcanic glass so sharp it can cut a man's

head off at a single blow; also bows and arrows, slings, shields of wood, arrowproof armor of quilted and feathered cotton, and helmets of wood or bone, crested with plumes.

Suddenly there is a noise outside, and one of the keepers of the arsenal says to Axa,

"Montezuma is approaching on his way to the temple! If you stand at the door, you may see him; but mind that you keep your eyes downcast as he passes, or it will be the worse for you!"

Axa crouches in the shadow of the doorway. A gorgeously dressed official, holding a wand in each hand, stalks by first, to give warning of the King's approach, and clear the road of wayfarers. Next come a number of courtiers, also gorgeously dressed, but walking in silence, with downcast eyes, as must all those who attend the monarch, except his nearest relatives. Cats may have looked at kings in old Mexico, but no mere subjects were permitted to. Swaying on the shoulders of four nobles is now seen the King's litter, canopied and bordered with trappings of feather-work and jewels; and on it rides the King, the great Montezuma.

So dark is the corner where Axa hides, and so long and dark the eyelashes of the Aztec boy, that somehow he manages to steal a look at the monarch without being detected; and this is what he sees. A slender man, the coffee of his complexion mixed with more

cream than usual in Mexico, a thin, handsome face, and fine eyes, which Axa thinks might look either severe or kind, as occasion requires. There is an expression on his face which puzzles Axa; a sad expression, no, more than sad, a look of fear. What is it that Montezuma dreads? Is he not king of all Mexico, and has he not everything to make him happy? Are not three hundred dishes of delicious food served to him on porcelain plates at each meal by the most beautiful girls in the kingdom, with golden pitchers full of rich chocolate beaten to a froth? Does he not sit in his palace upon softest embroidered cushions, with a gold screen to protect his kingly person from the heat of the fire, which throws out an exquisite odor of cedar and other scented woods? Has he not the very ugliest imaginable humpbacked dwarfs to amuse him with their antics? Are not beautifully painted and gilt tubes, filled with liquid amber and the precious herb called "tabaco," handed him after meals, that he may inhale their smoke and so fall into a refreshing sleep? When he desires exercise, may he not play the game of *totoloc* with golden balls, or visit his pleasure houses along the shore of the lake, or hunt in special preserves, where none but himself is permitted to kill the deer, hare and rabbits? What could mortal man want other than this? Yet the shadow is there, on the King's pale face; and as Axa observes it, the intuition which simple people often possess whispers

to him that it will spread and spread till it covers all of Montezuma's kingdom.

But Axa is only a boy, and premonitions are quickly forgotten in the excitement of following the royal procession to the temple. Soon he reaches the great limestone wall, more than a mile long, which encloses the sacred courtyard, and enters the gate. Over the white sandstone pavements of the yard pass and repass a multitude of people: priests, nuns, attendants and school-children, all of whose duty it is to keep the place in perfect order and the sacred fires in front of the altars perpetually burning. Montezuma's cortège has passed the many smaller temples, each with its courtyard and idols, and has paused before the Great Temple where Montezuma alights, to make the ascent of the one hundred and fourteen steps on foot. Axa watches him and the courtiers wind slowly around the building, for the steps are so arranged that worshipers must walk all the way around the temple between the successive flights. When they reach the summit of the great edifice, which is like a pyramid with the top cut off, the air suddenly thrills with the strange, melancholy "boom" of the huge serpent-skin drum, struck by a priest to announce the human sacrifices made in honor of the King's visit. As far as eight miles away the Indians hear it and tremble.

The sound fills Axa with such terror that he longs to fly; but his feet are like lead, and superstition keeps

him rooted to the spot. As soon as Montezuma is through worshiping he, too, must pay his respects to these dreadful gods. So presently he finds himself climbing the staircase, with trembling knees. His fright is not lessened as he enters the chapel on the first floor. There, looming dimly through clouds of incense, raised upon high altars of stone, he sees two enormous idols, covered all over with gold and precious stones. The one at the right has a great, broad face, with distorted, angry eyes, a necklace of ornaments representing human hearts around his neck, serpents winding about his body, a bow and a bunch of arrows in his hands. This is the terrible War-god, Huitzilopochtli. Beside him is the statue of a page, carrying his shield and spear. The idol at the left has a face like a bear, and uncanny, shining eyes, made from the mirrorlike stone, obsidian. He is Tetzcatlipuca, called "The Shining Mirror." Is it the incense from the pans of burning copal in front of them which wavers, or do they move? Have they come to life, to show their fierce delight in smoke made not alone by copal, but by the human hearts that burn there in the embers? Many victims have been sacrificed this morning on the huge stone of sacrifice, a block of jasper five feet long which stands in front of the statue of the war-god. Its convex top shows how the victims lay, with chest raised for the fatal blow of the executioner-priest's obsidian knife. There is blood everywhere, on the sacrificial

stone, the altars, the pavements, the priests' robes and hands, and in their long hair. And as Axa gazes at the dreadful sights and breathes in the foul air, even his strong Aztec nerves give way, he feels faint, and hurriedly leaves the chapel, not daring to look back lest he should meet the angry glances of the offended gods. He will not climb to the next story, where rest the ashes of dead monarchs and nobles, still less to the upper platform, where are other chapels with horrible idols and the great serpent-skin drum. No, he descends as fast as his legs will carry him to the courtyard, and even when he is in the midst of the orderly, busy throng he is not reassured. For there are other temples and idols all about, and suddenly he finds himself in front of one which is shaped like the great, yawning mouth of a serpent, with fangs exposed. Axa is not tempted to explore this snake's interior; in fact, he does not stop running till he is well outside the courtyard walls. Even then he cannot help shuddering, as, looking over his shoulder, he sees the massive bulk of the great temple towering over all the other buildings in the city, a great whited sepulcher, pure and shining without, within full of all abominations. What goes on in Axa's mind as he looks at it? Does he accept the human sacrifices as a necessity, and feel ashamed of himself for being terrified by them? Or does he vaguely rebel, wondering why such things have to be in this beautiful land, under this cloudless sky, and long for a day when

no more hearts shall be torn from living victims, when no more streams of blood shall trickle down the sides of the stone of sacrifice,—a day when the fat gods with their cruel faces shall be hurled down the steps of the temple and broken into a thousand pieces?

Let us hope that he does; for these very things are to happen before Axa has grown to be a man.

CHAPTER III

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE AZTECS

When Axa first entered the temple, he paused to look at the great calendar stone, one of the sights of the place. It was twelve feet across, and tremendously heavy. In bringing it to Tenochtitlan from the quarry, the floating bridge on which it was taken across the lake had broken down, and precipitated the stone and many of the priests who were superintending its moving to the bottom of the lake. The priests were drowned, but the stone was finally raised and installed in the temple with many human sacrifices.

Since this very calendar stone is to-day on exhibition in the National Museum of Mexico, we may look over Axa's shoulder and see it just as he did.

The carvings signify the Mexican system of keeping time. They divided time into cycles, years and days. A cycle was fifty-two years. The year, like ours, consisted of three hundred and sixty-five days. At the end of every cycle they added five days which served the purpose of the twenty-ninth of February in our Leap Year in keeping the reckoning correct, but were

nevertheless considered very unlucky. Each year was divided into eighteen months of twenty days each, and the months were divided into four weeks of five days

THE GREAT CALENDAR STONE

each. Each day had a different name, such as "Monkey," "Rain," "Small Bird," "Sea Animal," and so on. The months were also named, such extraordinary names as "Garlands of corn on the necks of idols," or "Mother of the Gods."

The Aztecs could not have divided time in this way if they had not been versed in mathematics and able to observe accurately the movements of the sun, stars and planets.

After Axa left the temple, he went to the house of a boy friend where he had been invited to make a visit. The friend was named Maxtla. He belonged to a good family who lived in the best section of Tenochtitlan in a fine stone house.

Axa, upon reaching there, found to his great delight that preparations for a party were in progress. The occasion was the birthday of Maxtla's father. The servants, under the direction of Maxtla's mother and sisters, were preparing many kinds of meat and fish, as well as the inevitable tortillas (corn meal cakes), frijoles (beans) and tomato sauces without which no meal is complete in Mexico, in modern times as well as ancient.

Shortly the guests began to arrive, richly dressed in gay cotton garments embroidered with feathers, and with plumes in their hair. As soon as they entered the house, they were given bouquets of flowers in token of welcome. The host saluted those of a superior rank by touching his hand to the earth, then putting it to his lips. Special grandees had pans of burning copal waved in front of them.

While waiting for the meal, some of the guests strolled through the beautiful courtyard, admiring the

grass and flowers. Others took their seats on mats or stools placed against the walls. All were carefully placed according to age and rank. Water and towels were passed by the servants, in order that they might cleanse their hands before eating. Next came pipes or smoking canes, filled with liquid amber or tobacco, of which each guest took a few puffs. This was supposed to make them hungry.

When the feast began, the food, which had been kept warm in chafing-dishes, was served on artistic plates of gold, silver, earthenware or tortoise-shell. Each person, before eating, threw a small piece of food into a lighted brazier, as an offering to the god of fire. When all the guests had finished eating, and drinking the rich, sweet chocolate beaten up to a froth, the tables were cleared, and the servants had their meal. Then they passed bowls of water again, and the smoking-canes.

After the dinner came music and dancing. The party did not break up until midnight, when the guests received at parting presents of food, robes, cacao beans and other things. Maxtla's people, who were rich, could afford such presents; but some families had been known to sell themselves into slavery for the sake of giving a single lavish feast, by which they hoped to make their memory immortal.

Maxtla and his family and their guest now sought their couches. Axa wanted to stay awake and talk

over the party, but he was so tired that he went to sleep as soon as he lay down. It was just as well, for there was a still more exciting event next day.

This was a great public festival given in the Plaza in honor of noblemen come to visit Montezuma. Early in the morning our friends hastened to the Plaza to take part in the dance. For weeks the choirs and bands belonging to the temples had been practicing music, and their leaders had been busy composing odes for the occasion. Now they were seated on mats in the square, surrounded by crowds of people. As Axa and his companions reached there, the music struck up, and the dance began. The musicians were in the center; around them was a small circle of the nobles and old men, outside them another circle of those of lower rank, while the third, a large one, in which Axa and Maxtla found places, consisted of young people. It was like three "Rings around a Rosy." Those in the inside circle moved slowly, in the next somewhat faster, while the young people on the outside swung round at a mad pace. All sang and moved their feet, arms, heads and bodies in time to the music, emphasizing their movements with rattles.

The scene was a brilliant one, the bright-colored cotton robes, gorgeous feathers, gleaming gold and silver ornaments and gay flowers set off by the flowing black hair and brown skins of the performers. Some of the

dancers had their faces painted in red, blue, yellow and other colors.

The motions of the dance were continually changing. Sometimes the dancers held each other by the hands, sometimes by the waist, now one took his left-hand neighbor for a partner, now the right. The songs grew continually higher and shriller and flutes, trumpets, drums and whistles louder. When exhausted dancers dropped out, others instantly took their places. So the performance continued throughout the whole day. The jesters and clowns meanwhile wandered to and fro among the crowd, cutting capers and making jokes.

Axa and Maxtla left the dance after a while to watch a drama which was being given in a temple. It was a sort of burlesque, in which the actors wore masks of wood, or were disguised in skins as animals. They imitated animals, beetles, frogs, lizards, birds and butterflies, or "took off" sick, lame, deaf and blind people, or other peculiar characters. This was thought to be very funny. Meanwhile the priests blew mud-balls at the actors through wooden tubes, or criticized or praised the performance audibly. Afterwards, audience and actors all joined in a dance.

In still another part of the Plaza, some Aztec acrobats were giving a performance which was much enjoyed by our two boys. A man lying on his back on the ground spun on the soles of his feet a heavy pole, holding two men, one at each end. A human column,

consisting of a man mounted on the shoulders of another, with a third standing on his head, walked around the circle of spectators. Other tricks were performed which could compare favorably with our modern circuses.

But the most exciting sport of all was the "Bird Dance." In the center of the plaza stood a tall pole, around which, a short distance from the top, was built a revolving wooden platform. Four long ropes passed from the top of the pole, through holes in the outside of the platform, and hung several feet below. Four acrobats, dressed to imitate birds, climbed up the pole by means of little loops of cord, stood on the frame and wound the ropes around their waists. Then they swung off into space, their weight setting the platform in motion, and the cords, as they untwisted, letting them sail out ever wider and wider, until they really seemed like swallows flying in circles. Meanwhile other performers danced, beat drums and waved flags on the wooden cap at the top of the pole, and, descending the ropes, took the places of the flyers who alighted.

At another playground the national game of the Aztecs, *tlachtli,* a kind of football, was being played by teams of professionals, with a priest as umpire. They played in an alley, one hundred feet long and fifty wide; the ball was of solid rubber, and the object of the game was to knock it over the wall at the opposite end, or, by great good luck and skill, into a hole

just large enough for it, made in a large stone carved with images of idols in the center of each of the side walls. The players could strike the ball only in a certain way agreed upon beforehand, either with the knee, elbow or shoulder. Whoever drove the ball through one of the holes, not only won the game for his side, but also the cloaks of all the spectators, who usually dispersed very hastily when this particular play was successful, to avoid paying!

By the time the boys had enjoyed all these performances the day was over, and they went home tired but happy. The next day they were to see a most interesting event, the admittance of one of Maxtla's friends, a lad a few years older than he, into the order of Mexican nobles called Tecuhtli.

It was no easy thing to become a Tecuhtli, or Knight, Axa learned. In the first place, it was necessary to have rich parents, who would spend years in collecting fine garments, jewels and golden ornaments for presents to the guests at the required feast. The candidate himself went into training for three years. He performed feats of strength and endurance, and learned not only to be brave, but patient, with perfect control of his will and temper.

Maxtla described to Axa the feast of the initiation, which had taken place a year before. The relatives and friends of the candidate went to the temple of the war-god, followed by a crowd of spectators. The can-

didate, arriving at the temple, climbed to the summit, and knelt before the god's altar. The high-priest pierced the cartilage of his nose in two places with a tiger's bone or eagle's claw, to signify that he must be as swift to overtake the enemy as an eagle, and as fierce in battle as a tiger, and inserted pieces of jet or obsidian in the punctures to remain during the coming year of probation, at the end of which they were replaced with gold or precious stones.

Then followed a strange performance. The high-priest began to insult the candidate in a loud voice. He called him a coward, a good-for-nothing, a contemptible creature! The assistant priests crowded around, echoing the insults. They pointed at the candidate, jostled him, jeered at him.

Maxtla saw his friend's eyes flash. He clenched his hands, and opened his mouth as if he were about to fling back the taunts in their faces, to fight them all and show them how much of a coward he was! But the slight movement passed, and he remained as motionless as a bronze statue. In vain the priests redoubled their efforts, and finally, in a paroxysm of apparent rage and scorn, tore the garments from him one by one, until nothing but the *maxtli,* loin-cloth, remained on the candidate's bruised body. They could not make him speak or lift a finger in his own defense. Reluctantly they drew away and acknowledged that he had met their test successfully.

If the candidate had retaliated in any way, he would have gone down from the temple rejected and disgraced, because he had been able to keep his temper no better than a woman! All the long months of preparation and the money spent by his parents for the feast would have been wasted. He would never have been made a Knight, and might even have been punished for sacrilege.

But everything had gone well with Maxtla's friend, and he was taken to a hall in the temple, to spend four days in penance, fasting and praying. He could eat only once in twenty-four hours, at midnight, and then only four small dumplings of corn meal, about the size of a walnut, and a little water. If he wished to acquire extra distinction, he would not touch even that. During this time he was clothed in the coarsest garments, and had to prick himself with thorns of the maguey in order to draw blood for purposes of worship. Worse still, he could only sleep for a few minutes, or three veteran warriors, who were keeping guard over him, would prick him with thorns and cry,

"Awake, awake! Learn to be vigilant and watchful; keep your eyes open, that you may look to the interests of your vassals."

At the end of the four days, the candidate went to some temple near his own home, to complete his year of probation.

Axa listened to this account with misgivings. He

resolved to watch over his own temper more carefully henceforward. He knew of occasions when his conduct would have kept him from ever becoming a Knight!

The young man's probation year was now over, and Maxtla and his family and Axa were going to the final feast. Arriving early at the spot, they saw the candidate being borne to the temple on a litter, with music and dancing. Again he ascended the steps of the temple and bowed before the hideous idol. The priests then removed his coarse clothes, and put on others of rich material, with a tunic embroidered with the badge of his new order. They bound his hair in a tight knot with a red cord, in the ends of which were tied bright-colored feathers. Arrows were placed in his right hand, in his left a bow. The high priest gave him a short address, enumerating his duties, and giving him a name, which he was to add to his own to show that he was a member of the Order. He finished by commanding him to be liberal and just, and to love his country and his gods. The ceremony was over, and the proud young man went down to his friends, a full-fledged Knight. Henceforward he would be treated with especial honor; his opinion would be of great weight, both in war and peace.

A tremendous feast now followed. Axa and Maxtla, in common with the other guests, received so many presents, that it took two slaves apiece to carry them home!

From the accounts of all these festivities, it may be thought that Mexican children did nothing but have a good time; but this was not the case. Both Axa and Maxtla had received a thorough education and training, as had all the other young people of their acquaintance. One of the few Mexican picture-writings now existing illustrates the upbringing of young Mexicans. As most of us are not as clever as the Aztecs in deciphering picture-writing, however, it needs a little explanation. The first group is a warning to bad children. At the left the father is punishing his son by holding him over the fumes of burning chile, which were very disagreeable; at the right the mother is threatening her daughter with the same punishment. Probably she was not as bad as the boy, so only needed a warning!

The same unpleasant subject of punishment is dealt with in the lower left-hand picture, where the boy is compelled to lie down naked on the wet ground, with his hands tied. At the right, the girl is being taught to sweep; or perhaps she has to sweep, for a punishment. In the third picture, the boys are having a little better time, especially the one in the canoe, who is bringing home bundles of wood or reeds; the other boy is carrying the same on his back. The girl at the right is being taught how to make tortillas. Notice the hollowed stone (*metate*), the pestle for grinding the corn, and the jar for water. These are common objects in

MEXICAN PICTURE-WRITINGS

the homes of Mexican Indians. All through these sketches the round objects represent the number of tortillas the child shall have at each meal, while the small circles show the age of the children. The balloons coming out of the figures of course show that they are speaking.

The lower group shows the boy learning how to fish. He looks as if he would enjoy it a great deal more if his father left him alone! The girl is learning to weave.

So we know that all was not play in the Aztec household. The education that was begun by the parents was finished by the priests, who would seem on account of the dreadful religious rites that they practiced not to have been good instructors, but who really were excellent in some things, for they taught the young people to be modest and brave, truthful, honest and respectful to their elders. The boys were put in charge of the priests or began training for the army under an officer when they were about fifteen.

The schools for the common people were called *telpochcalli,* or "Houses of the Youths," and there was one at least in each quarter of the city, like our public schools. Here the priests taught them how to sweep out the sanctuary, keep the fire burning in the sacred censers, clean the school-house, gather wood, and other useful things. They were also trained in arms, and how to sing and dance.

Youths of noble descent and those who intended to become priests went to a college or monastery, where they studied history, religion, philosophy, law, astronomy, how to write and decipher the picture-writing, songs about heroes, and hymns.

Some of the girls who desired to be priestesses withdrew from the world when they were twelve or thirteen, and went to live in the inside courts of the great temple. They had their hair cut in a peculiar way, but after one cutting they let it grow again; they wore plain white garments, without the usual Aztec decorations, and always slept in their clothes, to be ready for work in the morning. They worked hard, ate little, no meat except on feast days, and were constantly watched by the Lady-superior. They danced at the religious dances of the festivals, their feet and hands adorned with feathers, and their cheeks painted red with blood which they drew from their ears. Death was the punishment for slight offenses!

To go back to Axa. In a few days his delightful visit was at an end, his parents having sent the servants to fetch him in the canoe to their home a few miles out of town. On the way home Axa passed the famous floating gardens, which were formed of two or three feet of black mud from the lake placed on rafts of light wood, covered with rushes, reeds or sticks. In these gardens all kinds of crops were raised; and the beauty of them was, that they were self-irrigating and could be

moved anywhere the owner desired, with the aid of long poles. They had come into being at the time the Aztecs lived on the lake islands, and they are still pointed out near Mexico City, only now, owing to the receding of the waters, they have grown fast to the bottom of the lake.

Axa's home was in a village or ward. All the land in this ward was the common property of the villagers, but each family held a portion as long as they cultivated it. Axa already understood the simple methods of farming used by the Aztecs. They irrigated their lands by means of ditches. As they had no domestic animals, such as oxen, mules or horses, the plowing was done by hand with a copper implement made for the purpose. The Aztec method of sowing was to take a sharp stick, the point of which had been hardened by holding it in the fire, make holes in the ground in straight rows, and drop a few kernels of corn into each. Indian corn was the principal crop, but they also raised the useful maguey, and grew fruit trees.

Sometimes the men of a village or ward went hunting with bows and arrows, the game being deer, rabbits, wolves, foxes, jaguars, Mexican lions, coyotes, pigeons, partridge, quail and water fowl. They killed the small birds by blowing pellets or darts through a tube. In the southern provinces, young monkeys were caught by spreading corn as bait near a concealed fire, in which a kind of black stick was placed which ex-

ploded when hot. When this happened, the parent monkey was frightened and ran away, leaving the young ones to be caught. Crocodile hunting was good sport, the animals being captured by a sort of lasso or a sharp, barbed stick thrust in their mouths. Fishing was a constant occupation of the Aztecs.

One of the great events of Axa's childhood was the solemn ceremony of the end of the cycle. This time, which occurred only every fifty-two years, and which happened to come when he was a very young boy, he remembered distinctly. His parents and friends had all been greatly depressed. They feared that some great calamity was going to happen. When the five unlucky days at the end of the year arrived, they gave themselves up to despair, broke in pieces the images of their little household gods, allowed the fires in their houses and even in the temples to go out, and destroyed everything they possessed, including all their garments except those they were wearing.

On the evening of the fifth day Axa remembered forming part of a weird procession. Clinging to his mother's hand, he, with many others, wended their way towards a hill near the City of Tenochtitlan, which was dark and quiet, though crowded with people. Every one was looking anxiously at the sky, blazing with the great, bright, tropic stars, to see when the constellation of the Pleiades would reach its highest point, for then it would be midnight. The hour came. Sud-

denly the darkness of the hill-top was pierced by a feeble, flickering light, which showed for an instant the figure of a priest, who was rubbing two sticks together to produce it. Other priests were hovering over a stone of sacrifice. The multitude held their breaths. The spark of light grew brighter and bigger. Flames leaped into the air. Then a great sigh of relief went up from the waiting throng, who pressed forward to the sacred fire to light their torches by which, in turn, they would rekindle the cold hearth at home. The rising of the sun still further reassured them. Another cycle had begun! Eagerly they returned to their homes, to begin a great orgy of house-cleaning, putting on of new garments, feasting, dancing, singing and religious services at the temples.

The last celebration of this festival, the one in which Axa took part, occurred in the year 1506. The omens were not quite correct, for before a half of the cycle had passed, great reverses came upon the Mexicans, and their beautiful city fell into the hands of strangers. We will leave Axa here, hoping that he escaped the worst sufferings of the Conquest, and that he lived to be happy under the Spanish régime.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY SPANISH EXPLORATIONS

"Down from Cuba Island, in this sea of the west, my heart tells me there must be rich lands; because when I sailed as a boy with the old admiral, I remember he inclined that way."

It was Antonio de Alaminos who spoke thus to eager Spaniards, in the streets and houses of the Cuban settlements. Cuba was a disappointment to the Spaniards; it was lacking in gold and pearls; and their thoughts turned longingly to the unknown west, with its possible riches. Vasco Nuñez de Balboa had discovered the Pacific and the lands in the neighborhood of Darien, but what lay north was undiscovered. Antonio de Alaminos, who had sailed with the "old admiral," Columbus, and had ideas of his own on exploration, found ready listeners.

A company of one hundred and ten gentlemen, soldiers and other adventurers who had come from Spain and were disappointed in the riches the West Indies had yielded them, gathered in Cuba and determined to set out on an exploring expedition towards the West.

They chose Hernandez de Cordoba as their captain, and the hopeful Alaminos their pilot. Among the voyagers was a brave, simple soldier, Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who has left us an account of the Conquest.

There were three ships in Cordoba's expedition, and they left Cuba on the eighth of February, 1517, provided with cassava bread, pigs, glass beads and trinkets for barter, and, in order that their squadron might "not want for anything really useful," as the old chronicle explains, a priest. Glory as well as gold beckoned the adventurers westward. They longed to discover new countries for Spain, and to win the heathen of these countries to the Christian religion. They were a daring and gallant lot, and, though gold-hungry, not unprincipled. Diego Velasquez, the Governor of Cuba, ordered them to bring back slaves from some islands between Cuba and Honduras, but they declared with spirit that "neither God nor the King had commanded them to turn a free people into slaves!"

They sailed west, and presently sighted land—a small island off the point of Yucutan. They gave it the name of *Las Mugeres* (Woman's Island) because they found some images of female deities in a temple. Beyond, on the main land, they saw the towers and houses of a good-sized town, which they named Grand Cairo. The houses were built of stone and lime, and when the Spaniards landed they found golden ornaments in the temples.

Indians met them, repeating the words "con escotoch," an invitation to come with them, but the Spaniards thought it the name of the country, so gave the promontory they were on the name of Point de Cotoche, which it bears to-day. The Indians proving unfriendly, the Spaniards captured two and took to their ships and again sailed westward.

Their next landing-place was the Bay of Campeachy, where some natives inquired by signs if they came from the east, and repeated the word "Castilan," the name of a Spanish province. Here were temples with fresh blood stains about the altars, and native priests, in long, flowing robes, with long hair matted together with blood, who came out to meet the Spaniards burning incense, as if for gods. But when the Spaniards waved away the pans of incense, the Indians took offense and began beating their drums and blowing on their pipes and twisted shells a sort of war-music, and the Spaniards, still sore from their wounds in the recent skirmish, hurriedly made for their ships.

They sailed on again, excited beyond measure by the mysteries of this land, with its houses and temples of cut stone, its gold, and its blood-stained altars. But their fresh water began to fail, and when they landed to get more the Indians attacked them, carried off two and wounded many. The Spaniards hurriedly gained their ships and set sail for Cuba. On the way the sailors suffered so from thirst that they held the cold steel

edges of their axes between their swollen lips to cool them. They got water at Florida and reached Havana safely. Ten days later Cordoba, the captain, died from his wounds.

"Oh, what a fearful undertaking it is to venture out on the discovery of new countries, and place one's life in danger, as we were obliged to do," exclaims Bernal Diaz. I imagine that we would agree with him, if we could transport ourselves back through the centuries to those old sailing-ships, with their cramped quarters and rough, scanty food, their motley companies of desperadoes and adventurers.

"In this beautiful voyage of discovery," he goes on to say, sarcastically, "we had spent our all, and returned to Cuba covered with wounds, and as poor as beggars." Yet the lure held, and the next year he was ready to try his luck again.

The returned voyagers created a great sensation in Cuba. The covetous soul of the Governor, Velasquez, was delighted with the "crowns, golden ducks, fish and idols" from the heathen temples. He questioned the two Indian captives, who gave him to understand that there was much gold-dust in their country. "They told an untruth," says Bernal Diaz, "there are no gold mines on the Punta de Cotoche nor even in all of Yucatan." However, the Spaniards were eager to believe. During the conversation between the Governor and the natives, the natives, being shown a yucca root, exclaimed

tale. The Spaniards, hearing the two words, said, "You see, they call their country Yucatan." In this way the country received its name.

All the conversation of Cuba turned now on the new country of Yucatan, and the fame of the expedition spread even to Spain, where people indulged in many theories as to who were these strange people who built stone houses and worshiped hideous idols. Some learned ones declared that they must be the Jews who, driven out of Jerusalem under the Emperor Vespasian, might have sailed west, been shipwrecked and finally landed on this foreign coast.

Velasquez determined to send out another expedition. Cordoba being dead, Juan de Grijalva, a chivalrous young Spaniard, a nephew of the Governor's, was chosen for the leader. In charge of one of the vessels was Pedro de Alvarado, a handsome, golden-haired Spaniard. There were three other ships, under various captains. Bernal Diaz was of the company. It was like our gold rush to California in 1849—there was no trouble in getting recruits. Two hundred and twenty men were easily selected. They sailed on May 1, 1518.

They steered a little farther south than before, and touched land first at the island of Cozumel, and then at the coast of Champoton. After a skirmish in which they beat off the natives who attacked them, they sailed along the coast, reaching in June the large river Ta-

basco. Here were many natives. The Spaniards sent their two Yucatan captives to treat with them, and, finding them friendly, they all landed, and began a merry trade of blue glass beads, small mirrors and imitation corals in exchange for broiled fish, fowls, fruit, maize-bread and small golden ornaments furnished by the natives. The Indians said they had little gold, but that further on towards the setting of the sun there was a country where it was found in great abundance. The name of the country was Culhua or Mexico. These magic syllables as yet meant nothing to the Spaniards.

The Spaniards set sail again, and now they saw for the first time the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevadas in Mexico. Stationed at the mouth of a large river were men with banners, messengers from Montezuma, who had heard at once of the second arrival of the Fair God's descendants on the southern shore. The Spaniards landed, and were propitiated with gold, according to Montezuma's orders. Poor Montezuma! He did not know that each piece of gold that he sent these greedy "gods" was a nail in his own coffin! The Spaniards calmly took possession of the country here in the name of "His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor Charles V."

As soon as the gold supply gave out, they went away from there, landing some time later on an island outside what is now the harbor of Vera Cruz, which they called San Juan de Ulua. One of the ships now sailed

straight for Cuba, while the others took a more roundabout way. They all reached Cuba finally, but Grijalva found himself in disgrace with his uncle the Governor, who had been prejudiced against him by one of the first captains to reach home.

Velasquez was already looking about for some one to command another expedition to the new country. Being displeased with his nephew, his choice fell upon a magistrate of Santiago, a high-spirited gallant who had got in numerous scrapes in Cuba, but had also managed to distinguish himself and gain lands and gold. The name of this man was Fernando Cortes.

CHAPTER V

THE BOY WHO WAS BORN TO ADVENTURE—FERNANDO CORTES

There are boys who are born to adventure as the sparks fly upward! Such a one was the boy Fernando Cortes, born in the village of Medellin, in the Spanish province of Estremadura, in 1485. He was seven years old, a sickly youngster, when Columbus was discovering America. No one would have prophesied that he would live to undergo the most extraordinary hardships in the New World. His parents were quite in despair about him, in fact, thinking he would never live to grow up. They drew lots as to which of the Twelve Apostles should be his patron saint; and when St. Peter was chosen in this way, both they and the boy were quite convinced that he helped him to grow strong and well.

Even St. Peter, however, could not make him meek and obedient. When Fernando was fourteen, his parents sent him to the University of Salamanca, the finest in all Europe, to study law. The boy stayed there for two years, but at the end of that time he turned up

at home again. He had had enough of college. Nothing that his parents could say or do would make him consent to be a lawyer. His tastes were all for action and adventure. Being now idle, and full of superfluous energy, he fell into one scrape after another, so that his family was finally glad to allow him to enlist in a great expedition which was sailing for the West Indies under Ovando. The night before he sailed, Cortes got into trouble again. He was skylarking about town when he fell from a wall and hurt his knee, and was nearly run through the body into the bargain by an irate gentleman on whose premises he was trespassing. If it had not been for an old woman who rushed out of her house at hearing the disturbance and interceded for him, he might never have lived to see Mexico. He was badly bruised enough as it was to prevent him from sailing with the West Indies expedition.

His next thought was to go to Naples to serve under the famous Captain, Gonzalvo de Cordoba. He started, but only got part way; his money gave out, and after a year of hardship he turned up like a bad penny in Medellin.

His parents were desperate by now, and glad to give him money to carry out his first intention of going to the West Indies. He sailed in 1504, in a little trading-vessel, his ship reaching the port of Santo Domingo safely four days after Easter.

Young Cortes went at once to the Governor's house. The Governor was away, but his secretary was there and proved to be an old friend of his.

"Register yourself a citizen," said the latter, "promise not to leave the island for five years, and you shall have lands and Indians; after the expiration of your time you may go where you choose."

"I want gold, not work," replied Cortes, "and neither in this island nor in any other place will I promise to remain so long."

The restless young man soon found occupation in helping to quell revolts among the Indians of the Islands, and in this way came under the notice of the Governor, Velasquez. He was given a piece of land with Indians to work it, this being the oppressive custom of those times. Such lands were called *encomiendas*. Under Velasquez, he helped to conquer Cuba in 1511; an easy task, since the natives were too poor-spirited to offer much resistance. He was given more land and Indians here, and began to grow rich, gaining a fortune of several thousand castellanos. "God will have kept a better account than I, of the lives it cost," wrote the good Bishop Las Casas, called the "Protector of the Indians," whose standard of humanity in such matters was far ahead of his age, and who was saddened by seeing the natives die off like flies under Spanish rule. Cortes was not cruel according to Spanish ideas of that time.

Meanwhile, all was not smooth sailing with Cortes. He had gained the favor of the governor by his bravery, his good manners and genial spirit; he was soon to lose it by rash conduct. Cortes was certainly a ladies' man; indeed, he was altogether too fond of flirtation. About that time there came to West Indies from Spain four beautiful sisters, in the suite of the wife of the Viceroy, Maria de Toledo. Every one knew they had come with the idea of getting married. They went first to Santo Domingo, but somehow the right suitors did not turn up there, so they tried Cuba. They were very pretty, but the prettiest of all was Donna Catalina. Cortes began paying her attention. Things went so far that she promised to marry him, when suddenly Cortes grew cold and wished to break the engagement. In the meantime the Governor Velasquez had fallen in love with another sister, who persuaded him to bring the faithless suitor to terms. Velasquez sent for Cortes and told him he must marry Donna Catalina without delay.

Cortes did not relish being dictated to in such a personal matter. He declined. The governor thereupon clapped him in prison. Cortes escaped, carrying off with him the sword and buckler of his jailer, and took refuge in a church. One day, however, he was heedless enough to step outside for a minute, when the magistrate and others seized him and carried him on board a ship lying in the harbor. Cortes escaped, dressed

in servant's clothes. On the way, the small boat he was in capsized, and he swam to shore, with some valuable papers tied in a packet on the top of his head. He took refuge in his partner's house, who was the brother of the lady who had caused all the trouble. The partner did not appear to share in his sister's quarrel, for he gave Cortes clothes and arms, and the latter again took refuge in the church. Velasquez decided to forgive him, and sent mutual friends to make peace.

The amusing part of the story is, that now that he was no longer obliged to marry Donna Catalina, Cortes decided to do so, and told Bishop Las Casas afterwards that he lived as happily with her as if she had been a duchess.

He may have lived with her happily, but he did not do so long. And it would seem, on the whole, that he was far from a perfect husband. Explorers and conquerors are, one imagines, seldom extremely satisfactory in domestic life, and poor Donna Catalina, left behind when her husband went to Mexico, and greeted but coldly when she went to meet him there, may have been sorry that she ever held him to his promise. But this is enough of the romance that was not much of a romance after all.

Other historians have it that the reason Cortes and the governor fell out was because Cortes was detected carrying accusations against Velasquez to some judges from Spain, who had recently arrived in Hayti. This

was, of course, rank treason in the governor's eyes, and he is said to have nearly hanged Cortes on the spot. Friends interceded, and Cortes was spared, but humbled.

"I saw Cortes in those days so small and humble that he would have craved the notice of the meanest servant of Velasquez," Bishop Las Casas has recorded.

Velasquez was a man whose moods were uncertain, and whose anger lasted no longer than his good-will. It was after the quarrel that he appointed Cortes magistrate, and stood godfather to one of his children. Cortes would now have been very well off, except that neither he nor the pretty Donna Catalina was economical, but each spent money as fast as it came in.

This was the man whom the governor, in spite of previous differences, appointed as commander of the new expedition. Cortes was of medium height, well-built, without an ounce of superfluous flesh, good-looking, except for a rather sallow complexion, with eyes that were ordinarily full of kindness, but could dart lightnings of wrath upon occasion. His poise was perfect. He was usually cheerful and good-humored, but when he did lose his temper, he lost it to good purpose, and there were none who dared offend him a second time. He dressed in good taste, plainly but richly. He ordered his house well, and loved to entertain; especially scholars and soldiers; with the first he talked the Latin he had learned at Salamanca, and even re-

cited poetry to them of his own composition; with his comrades in arms, he exchanged stories and jokes. He had most winning manners, and was popular with both men and women. Above all, he was devout. This man, whose high spirits got him into so many scrapes, knew many prayers and psalms by heart, went to church every day, besides saying morning prayers, and would undoubtedly have died in defense of his religion, though he did not always live in accordance with its laws. It is hard for us nowadays to understand the religion of the Spaniards of the sixteenth century, but it was very real to them, and in Cortes' life especially was a factor which must not be forgotten when we come to the story of the Conquest. In general, it must be remembered that the Spaniards were determined to save souls if they had to massacre bodies by the thousands to do it! They saw no incongruity in the two actions. The twentieth century, with its wars in which human life is sacrificed on a scale the Spaniards never dreamed of, is in no condition to judge them too hastily.

This expedition was the chance for which Cortes had been longing. He threw himself heart and soul into the preparations, and staked everything he possessed on the venture, raising loans by means of mortgages on his property. He naturally felt himself a person of increased consequence, and acted accordingly, wearing for the first time a bunch of feathers in his cap and a gold necklace and medal, "which gave him a very

stately appearance," says honest Bernal Diaz. With part of his loans he bought "a state robe with golden trains, ensigns bearing the arms of our sovereign the king, beneath this a Latin inscription, the meaning of which was, 'Brothers, let us in true faith follow the Cross, and the victory is ours!'"

Human nature being what it is, this behavior increased the disapproval of those who were already displeased with Cortes' appointment. The anti-Cortes party grew more active and influenced the governor's jester to play upon the governor's fears by prophecies, uttered as foolish jests, but suspected to be barbed with meaning.

"Well-a-day, friend Diego," said this licensed character, meeting Velasquez and his train, with Cortes at his right side, one day in the road, "what manner of a captain-general have you appointed? He of Medellin and Estremadura! A captain who wants to try his fortune in no small way. I am afraid he will cut his sticks for your whole squadron; for he is a terrible fellow when he once begins, this you may read in his countenance."

"Begone, you drunken fool," cried a friend of Cortes, as the jester grew even more reckless in his remarks. "Some one has put you up to saying these things!"

The jester took no notice of the words, even though they were accompanied by a blow at his head.

Fernando Cortes.

"Long live my friend Diego and the bold captain Cortes!" he cried. "Upon my life, master Diego, I must really go myself with Cortes to those rich countries, in order that you may not repent of the bargain you have made!"

The governor turned red and looked uneasy, but Cortes kept his usual calmness. He knew, as did the others in the company, that the jester had been coached by his enemies. In spite of their source, the insinuations rankled in the governor's mind, until he finally decided to remove Cortes from the commandership and give it to one Vasco Porcallo instead.

Cortes heard of this decision through his friends, the men who had urged the governor to appoint him. He hurried his preparations, got his stores and his men on board his ships, said good-by to the governor, who had not quite got to the point of carrying out his intentions, and sailed away. Before doing so, he had seized the entire meat supply of the town, paying for it with the gold chain from his neck.

The fleet stopped at Macaca, Trinidad and Havana. At each place they procured fresh stores, mostly cassava-bread and bacon, and new recruits, some of them persons of distinction, such as the Alvarados, Pedro and Juan, Alonso de Avila, who had had command of one of the ships in Grijalva's expedition, Christobal de Oli, Gonjalo de Sandoval, and Francisco de Montejo.

Meanwhile the governor, a man distinctly of second thoughts, was becoming more and more uneasy. His friends left him not a minute's peace. They told him that Cortes was too fond of power and would not act according to the governor's interests. A half-witted astrologer prophesied that Cortes would now revenge himself on Velasquez for being put in prison. "Sly and artful as he is, he will be the means of ruining you, if you are not upon your guard."

Finally Velasquez distractedly sent two messengers to Trinidad with private instructions to the magistrate, who happened to be his brother-in-law, to deprive Cortes of the command and give it to Vasco Porcallo. He also wrote letters to friends of his in the squadron, asking them to leave.

What was his disgust to hear presently that Cortes had become so popular with the officers and soldiers that none would leave him, and especially not the governor's own friends, that the magistrate of Trinidad had not even attempted to carry out his orders, that the very messengers he had sent with his instructions were joining the fleet! The only notice, in fact, that was taken of Velasquez' communications was a letter from Cortes, all the more maddening to the governor because it was written in the most friendly terms, expressing his "utter astonishment at the resolution he had taken," and assuring Velasquez that he, Cortes,

"had no other design than to serve God, his majesty the King, and the governor."

At Havana, Cortes' company procured sixteen horses, animals which, figuring in the imagination of the natives as gods, were to play an important part in the conquest. Bernal Diaz describes each of them as minutely as he does the principal men of the company. The fleet set sail, in spite of another frantic attempt on the part of the governor to stop them, on February 18, 1519. They steered for the island of Cozumel.

CHAPTER VI

CORTES GAINS A FOOTHOLD ON THE MEXICAN COAST

Upon landing at Cozumel, Cortes took pains to reassure the natives through the interpreter whom he had brought with him, one of the two Indians captured during the previous expedition. The dark-skinned inhabitants soon gathered on the shore, to watch Cortes review his troops, whom he addressed "in words of fire," reminding them of their great mission to bring the True Faith to these barbarians and to conquer their lands in the name of God and the Spanish king.

"Be true to me, as I am to you," he concluded, "and I will reward you with wealth such as you have never dreamed of!"

He had struck the right note for those gold-seeking dare-devils, and they cheered him to the echo. All eyes turned proudly to their banner, floating in the soft breeze from the Gulf. It was of taffeta silk, showing a red cross on a black ground, sprinkled with blue and white flames; and on it was the motto (as freely translated),

"Let us follow the Cross, and in that sign we shall conquer."

Cortes had a special errand at Cozumel. He had heard of the Indians' repeating the word "Castilan" at the time of the last expedition, and thought it might mean there were Spaniards among them. Melchior, the interpreter, inquired and was told that there were several Spaniards some distance inland. Cortes at once sent an expedition to find them, and also gave some Indian messengers a letter. The expedition returned, unsuccessful; and the fleet now sailed away from Cozumel.

Just after they had gone, a man as dark of complexion as any native, with only a few rags of clothing, emerged from the woods upon the beach, and cried out with despair in Spanish when he found the ships gone. But presently, to his joy, he saw them returning. He hurriedly bribed Indian canoemen with some glass beads to paddle him with all haste towards Cozumel. The Spaniards, who had returned on account of a leak in one of the ships, spied the canoe, and Cortes sent Andreas de Tapia to learn its errand. The Indians landed on the island, and a man, to all appearance one of them, rushed towards Tapia as if to embrace him, exclaiming, in broken Spanish,

"Are you Christians? Who is your king?"

Andreas stared at the stranger. The latter's face was black with tan; his hair was shorn like that of an Indian slave; he carried a paddle across his

shoulders, his clothing was sketchy in the extreme, consisting of a cloak all in rags; but in one corner of it was carefully folded a prayer-book! He was a Spaniard!

Brought before Cortes, he cowered in the servile Indian manner he had acquired during his captivity, and, in answer to the astonished question, "Where is the Spaniard?" answered, humbly, "I am he."

Cortes was overjoyed. He saw that the man would be useful to him, and ordered him clothed like a Christian once more.

The Spaniard, whose name was Geronimo de Aguilar, had been shipwrecked about eight years before, while crossing with a small party from Darien to San Domingo. They had been cast on the shore of Yucatan, where the Mayas took them prisoner. Most of the Spaniards had been sacrificed at once to the Maya gods, a few died of hardship, and the rest were put in cages to fatten for the sacrifice. Aguilar managed to escape, and fled to a chief, who protected him. One other Spaniard besides himself also survived. His name was Guerrero.

When Aguilar received Cortes' letter, together with the beads for ransom, which had been faithfully delivered by the Indian messenger, he was overcome with joy, obtained his freedom at once from his chief, and went off to tell Guerrero the good news. Guerrero heard it with mixed emotions. He had married an

Indian woman, had several Indian children, and looked by this time exactly like a native, his cheeks tattooed, his ears and lips pierced with gold and copper rings. He was a very strong man, and on this account had been made a chief.

"Go! and may God be with you!" he told Aguilar. "For myself, I could not appear again among my countrymen. My face has already been disfigured, and my ears pierced; what would my countrymen say? Only look at my children, what lovely little creatures they are; pray give me some of your glass beads for them, which I shall say my brothers sent them from my country."

Guerrero's Indian wife, with a flash of black eyes and a scowl on her swarthy countenance, added her shrill remonstrances.

"You slave! You have come to take my husband away from me! Mind your own affairs, and let us alone!"

So Aguilar left this happy family with a clear conscience, and hurried to the sea-shore, only to find that the fleet had sailed away! Imagine his despair, and then his relief when the lucky leak brought them back again.

The fleet once more left Cozumel, and sailed along the coast as Cordoba's expedition had done. At the Tabasco River they found the natives unfriendly, in spite of the fact that Cortes caused to be read to them

by a notary a long speech in Spanish (of which they naturally understood not a word), explaining that they were all descended from Adam and Eve, and in charge of St. Peter, whose representative, the Pope, had given the dominion in America to the Spanish king!

In reply, the natives let fly their bows and arrows and brandished their clubs and notched swords, in an attempt to keep the Spaniards from landing. The latter beat them off, and landed. Cortes took formal possession of the country for his sovereign, drawing his sword and making two deep cuts in a large tree which grew in the court of the principal temple, crying out that he would defend the possession of this country with sword and shield against any one who should dare to dispute it.

The next morning the Indians attacked the Spaniards in great numbers. The native warriors wore feathers in their hair, quilted cotton armor, and paint on their faces. Their weapons were huge bows and arrows, shields, lances, and the swords made of obsidian mounted in wood. They showed great bravery, rushing upon the invaders "like furious dogs," and were not even daunted by the Spanish musketry and cannon. But their courage failed them when Cortes with sixteen horsemen swept up on them from behind a wood. The horses, which seemed all of a piece with their riders, appeared to the poor natives like strange and irresistible gods. Their flashing eyes, pawing hoofs, and

quick movements struck terror to their hearts, and they broke ranks and fled.

It was during this fight that the Spaniards are said by some historians to have seen either St. James, the patron of Spain, or St. Peter, Cortes' patron, mounted on a gray horse, fighting for them on the battle-field. Bernal Diaz, however, denies this interesting rumor.

"Perhaps on account of my sins I was not considered worthy of the good fortune to behold them," he says, "for I could only see Francisco de Morla on his brown horse galloping up with Cortes . . . and yet again I never heard any of the four hundred soldiers, nor ever Cortes himself, nor any of the many cavaliers, mention this wonder, or confirm its truth."

At any rate, whether with supernatural aid or not, the battle of Ceutla was won; and the chiefs came forward, pledging submission to Cortes and his King, and bringing presents of food, golden trinkets, and clothing. Cortes received them graciously, but still further to awe the natives, ordered the cannon fired. When the Indians heard the noise like a clap of thunder, and saw the ball whizzing among the hills, their subjection was complete. Chiefs from further inland came to pay tribute. Cortes, through Aguilar, tried to tell them something of the Christian religion, and showed them an image of the Virgin Mary with the Child in her arms. The chiefs answered that they were much pleased with this "woman of distinction,"

and that they would like to keep her in their village. Cortes gave them the figure with an altar, and a wooden cross, a familiar symbol to the Indians, who associated it with the God of Rain.

The chiefs, when asked where they got their gold, answered, "From the country towards the setting of the sun," and repeated the words, Culhua, and Mexico.

Before the Spaniards left, the chiefs of Tabasco presented them with twenty young women as slaves. One of these was a very bright-looking, pretty girl, named Marina. Aside from her looks and her cleverness, there was something about Marina which marked her as a person of distinction, even though she came to them in such a humble capacity. Indeed, Marina had a story not unbefitting a heroine; for heroine she proved to be—*the* heroine of the Conquest.

Some years before, a daughter had been born to the chief of one of the coast provinces. When the princess, as we may call her, was still but a tiny girl, her father died, and her mother married again. As so often happens in fairy-stories, the princess was neglected in favor of a little half-brother who was born to the new couple. And one night she was actually spirited away, by order of her heartless mother, and placed with a poor family in the province of Xicalango, and it was given out that she was dead.

The people with whom she had been placed disposed

of her as a slave to the Tabascans, who presently gave her, now full-grown and beautiful and clever and spirited, in spite of her misfortunes, to Cortes. She fell in love with Cortes, and, becoming a Christian herself, worked for the Christians with heart and soul. Cortes soon found her of the greatest value as an interpreter and general pacifier. She spoke the Tabascan language, which was the same as that of Yucatan, which Aguilar understood. She also spoke Mexican, the language of her native province.

The Spaniards now took ship and continued their journey, reaching the harbor of San Juan de Ulua on Thursday of Holy Week, the twenty-first of April.

The next day, Good Friday, they landed and pitched their camp on the low and sandy coast. The Indians were very friendly and helped them in every way. The insects, of which there were all possible varieties, were not at all friendly, but stung and bit the invaders until they were almost frantic.

On Easter Sunday some embassadors from Montezuma, including Teutlili, the governor of this coast province, arrived, followed by a great number of Indians. Cortes, through the interpreters, told them that he had come from the greatest monarch in the world, the Spanish king, with a message to their monarch, of whom his king had long since heard. Where did the Mexican king live, that the embassy might go at once and pay their respects to him?

Teutlili answered rather sharply,

"Since you are but just arrived, it would be more fitting that you, before desiring an interview with my monarch, should accept this present, which we have brought you in his name, and disclose your wishes to me."

He then gave Cortes some very beautiful gold trinkets and feather-embroidered garments.

In exchange for these gifts of real value, Cortes presented him with an armchair, carved and painted, a scarlet cap with a medal representing St. George killing the dragon, some imitation jewels and glass beads.

During the interview, the Aztec painters, forerunners of our movie camera-men, were busy sketching on maguey paper Cortes and all the officers, Marina and Aguilar the interpreters, the dogs, the fire-arms, the horses—everything of interest. Cortes arranged a show for their benefit. He ordered the cavaliers to mount their horses and gallop two by two, at full speed, on the firm wet sand; the cannon was fired, and the stone ball rolled with a terrible sound among the sand-hills. All this the startled painters faithfully depicted.

The Indian governor noticed a helmet worn by one of the soldiers and asked if he might take it to Montezuma, since it resembled one on the statue of their war-god Huitzilopochtli. Cortes gave it to him at once, but marred his generosity somewhat by asking to have it

returned full of gold-dust! The embassy then took its leave.

When they reached Tenochtitlan and told their news, Montezuma's perplexity increased. He looked at the helmet, so like the one worn by their war-god, and was almost convinced that the newcomers were of divine origin. If that were so, it was useless to oppose them; but if they were men, he reasoned, they could easily be crushed after they got into the country. Therefore, to be on the safe side, he sent word for every honor to be shown the strangers, and everything they wished to be given them. At the same time, he ordered his magicians to go to the coast and try to dispel the invaders by their incantations. The latter obeyed, but, strange to say, their magic was of no avail. When they returned and told the king this, it was another proof to him that the strangers were divine.

The allied kings and nobles, who were continually meeting in council, were as divided in mind as their chief. One only, Cuitlahuac, lord of Itztapalapan, was for crushing the invaders instantly, before they could do any harm.

"It seems to me, my lord, that you should not admit to your house one who will drive you out of it," he urged, prophetically. Montezuma paid attention to this wise counsel only by trying again to discourage the strangers from coming further. He sent Teutlili back with gorgeous gifts for the Spaniards: a round gold

plate about the size of a wagon-wheel, beautifully worked to represent the sun, a "moon" of silver, even larger than the sun, a number of beautiful small golden ornaments, lockets and chains, etc., more cotton and featherwork, and lastly, the helmet filled with gold-dust. "This," says the native historian, Torquemada, "cost him his life!"

With the gifts came a message. Montezuma was delighted, he declared, with the arrival of such courageous men in his country. He wished very much to see their great emperor, of whom he had already heard. (Artful Montezuma, he was no child in diplomacy himself!) He sent him these presents. He would be glad to furnish the emperor's representatives with whatever they needed during their stay; but as for Cortes calling upon him, he had better give up all thought of it, as it was not necessary, and would be found very difficult.

You have heard the old conundrum about what would happen if an irresistible force met an immovable body? It would be interesting also to wonder what messages would be exchanged if the irresistible force and the immovable body were both pastmasters in the art of diplomacy, and talked it all over before the conflict. One could almost tell what those messages would be by reading those which passed between Montezuma and Cortes.

Cortes replied that the Emperor Charles of Spain would be extremely displeased if, after his ambassa-

dors had come from such distant countries and crossed such vast seas, they should go home without paying their respects to Montezuma. He wished, therefore, to go to him and himself receive his commands. At the same time Cortes gave the Mexican ambassadors, in return for the magnificent gifts he had received, a couple of linen shirts apiece, some blue glass beads, and other trifles, including a cup of Florentine gilt.

Teutlili, much against his will, departed with the message.

Eight or ten days after, he returned again for the last time, bringing more presents, but also a curt message from Montezuma to send no more messengers to Mexico, and to make no further mention of coming to see him.

Cortes thanked the ambassadors; but to his own men he remarked dryly,

"Really, this Montezuma must be a great and rich gentleman; nevertheless, if God be willing, we shall one day visit him in his palace!"

This interview took place at the time of the Ave Maria. The bell for the Angelus rang out, and all the Spaniards knelt about the cross which had been built on a sand-hill. The Mexicans, greatly impressed, wished to know the meaning of the service, and this gave Father Bartolomo de Olmedo an opportunity to explain to them what he could of the Christian faith. Cortes added that among the many reasons he had for

visiting them, the chief was that they should give up the worship of their horrible idols and abolish human sacrifices. The Mexicans listened in silence, and soon took their departure.

At once the coast Indians who had been bringing the Spaniards provisions ceased to do so, and they began to suffer from lack of food. The site of their camp was very unhealthy; before May was over, thirty men fell ill and died. Many of the survivors became discouraged. They said that they had accomplished all that the Governor, Velasquez, meant that they should; they had recovered the Spaniard lost in Yucatan, had received a great deal of gold, and had preached the Gospel to the natives. Why should they not return at once, before more of their number were dead from sickness and starvation, and before they were attacked by the Mexicans?

Cortes replied mildly. He thought it inadvisable to go back, he said, before they had seen more of the country; they could live on the Indian corn in the fields; as for the thirty men who had died, that was really a small number for a warlike undertaking.

As a matter of fact, plans were forming in his brain of which they had no idea. He had learned through secret messengers sent him by the Indian tribes that many wished to throw off Montezuma's yoke; and he was already planning to use these discontented ones as allies in a march to Montezuma's capital.

CHAPTER VII

THE RICH CITY OF THE TRUE CROSS

Several of the officers were won over to Cortes' side, and went about among the soldiers, persuading them to remain. It was decided to change the site of the camp to a more healthful one some miles to the north. In doing so, they left the dreary sand-hills behind, and found themselves at the edge of the rich, rolling country, where green palms, tropical vines, gay-plumaged birds and rare flowers gladdened their eyes. They named the settlement *Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz,* the "Rich City of the True Cross," the richness referring to the soil, the "True Cross" to the circumstance that they had landed on Good Friday. The settlement of Vera Cruz was afterwards moved back to its present site on the coast. The threatened mutiny was quelled for the time, and the men, of their own accord, requested Cortes to found the settlement and appoint its officers. This he did, resigning the authority he had received from Velasquez into their hands. They immediately elected him captain-general of the new colony. By this ruse Cortes freed himself from obedi-

ence to Velasquez. He had made it appear, and made the men think, that it was all their own doing; which is one of the signs of a great commander.

These formalities over, he took about four hundred men and set out to visit the Totonacs at their village of Cempoalla. The Indians in terror fled at their approach, leaving signs of human sacrifices in the temples.

Three miles from Cempoalla, they were met by twenty Indians bearing large, deep-red, deliciously scented pineapples, a present from the chief. Soon the town came in view, its freshly plastered buildings shining in the sun. One of the horsemen mistook them for silver, and was well chaffed by his comrades when his error was discovered.

As they approached, the inhabitants thronged the streets in their gayest clothes of colored cotton stuffs, with ornaments of gold and headdresses of flowers and colored plumes. The houses, built of stone and mortar, were surrounded by lawns and gardens, and many had spacious courtyards. The chief of Cempoalla, a very fat man, was good nature itself and made the Spaniards welcome, giving them comfortable quarters and the best the town could offer in the way of food, chiefly corn and fresh plums. He also tendered Cortes a small present of gold and mantles, all, he said, that they possessed. Montezuma had taken the rest, and also oppressed them cruelly, seizing a great number

of their fairest girls and bravest young men yearly for sacrifice.

Cortes told him that since he was the envoy of the greatest sovereign in all the world, he would help him throw off the yoke of the tyrant.

As they were talking, who should arrive but five Mexican tax-gatherers, very grand personages, who marched haughtily by Cortes' quarters, their noses in the air, their wands of office in their hands, each tended by a slave who fanned away the flies. The Totonac chiefs talking with Cortes turned pale with fear, and left him hastily to order a great feast prepared for these representatives of the monarch whom they both feared and hated. Everywhere was a bustle of preparation, and Cortes and his men were quite neglected.

Learning from Marina what it was all about, Cortes determined to play a master-stroke. He summoned the chiefs back again peremptorily, and actually persuaded them to imprison these sacred persons. At first they turned pale with horror at the mere suggestion, but such was the force of Cortes' words that they not only summoned up courage to seize these grand officials, but added insult to injury by attaching them by the collar to long poles, like the worst criminals.

When the news of this deed spread, the Indians were convinced that the Spaniards who had instigated it were not men, but *teules,* or gods; and such they were called from that time on.

The chiefs, well aware what a dangerous step they had taken, wished to kill the tax-gatherers, so that they could not return to Mexico and tell how they had been treated; but Cortes prevented this. He had other plans. He placed a strong guard of Spaniards and Indians about the prisoners, and gave instructions to his sentinels that they should bring two of them to him at midnight without letting the Indian guards know.

When they appeared, he pretended not to know what had happened, and feigned astonishment when told.

He had never heard of the move till now! Let them not think that he had a hand in it! Why, he and his men were all Montezuma's sincerest friends and most devoted servants! To prove the truth of his words, he would set them free, that they might go back and tell Montezuma this, and how sorry Cortes was for what they had suffered. For the present, would they accept his invitation to supper?

Soon the perplexed officials were sitting down before a sumptuous meal of the best food the Totonacs had given the Spaniards. After it, Cortes sent them with a guard of his own sailors to a place on the coast out of the way of the Totonacs.

At daybreak, the Totonacs were very much surprised to find two of their prisoners gone. How could they have escaped? Cortes was as surprised as they, and even more angry. The Totonac guards must have been very careless! Such a thing must not occur again.

He himself would take steps to prevent it. The rest of the prisoners must be brought, in chains, on board his ships, where they would be better watched. This was done.

Once he had the prisoners on board ship, and out of hearing of the Totonacs, he changed his tone completely, and told them, with a pleasant smile, that he had brought them there to rescue them from their captors, and that he would send them back to Mexico in a very short time. He soon kept his word.

Cortes' plan in all this duplicity was to stir up strife between Montezuma and his coast subjects and thus divide the empire and make it easier to conquer. On the other hand, he did not wish to come out yet as an open enemy of Montezuma's because that would make his entrance into the capital too difficult. It is astonishing to see how far-sighted he was, and how absolutely correct his moves were from an intriguing point of view, even at this early stage of the game, when he had only the slightest clues as to the state of the country and the possibility of overthrowing Montezuma's rule. But though we acknowledge the cleverness of his actions, we cannot admire them. We must remember, however, that in the age in which Cortes lived, such plotting was considered a part of statecraft in the most civilized countries. Nowadays we all know one great modern nation that still employs even worse methods in her dealings with other countries than those Cortes

used in the sixteenth century. And, strangely enough, the scene of some of her plotting has been laid in this very Mexico. You will see as you go on that this unfortunate land has been a gathering-ground for conspirators of all kinds. Cortes was the first we know of, the greatest, the most successful, and perhaps not the worst. He, at least, was not influenced entirely by base motives; for he was firmly convinced that the territory belonged by right to Charles V. of Spain, and he did honestly long to put a stop to the horrible human sacrifices he saw, and introduce a purer religion.

Having thus committed the poor Totonacs to a policy of opposition to Montezuma, and allowed the tax-gatherers to escape, Cortes now set his men to work to build the new settlement. The Indians helped, and in a surprisingly short time a church, storehouse, fort and houses were erected. Cortes himself put the first hand to the fort, carried earth and stone, and worked at the foundations. It was one of the secrets of his popularity that he not only directed, but led his men in everything, in work as well as in fighting.

Montezuma, meanwhile, was greatly puzzled by the actions of this perplexing white man. At first, when he heard of the rebellion of the Totonacs, he rightly laid it to the influence of the Spaniards and was for sending a force and crushing them at once. Before his soldiers left, the released prisoners arrived, and then the poor king did not know what to do. So, as usual, he com-

promised. He sent an embassy with more presents to Cortes, to thank him for the release of the tax-gatherers, but at the same time complained about the revolt of the Totonacs, for which he hinted the Spaniards were responsible.

This wavering and regard for the strangers on Montezuma's part more than ever convinced the Totonacs that the Spaniards were gods. Cortes himself was well satisfied, sent word to Montezuma that the Totonacs had passed under the jurisdiction of the King of Spain and so were freed from Montezuma's sovereignty, and finished by saying that he would explain all these matters when he called on Montezuma in person.

It was now almost time to take up his march over the high mountains towards the unknown capital. But before he left, Cortes, with his wonderful courage, took two bold steps. In the very faces of the enraged priests and threatening people, he ordered his soldiers to mount the steps of the temples in Cempoalla, seize the idols, and hurl them down, breaking them into a thousand pieces. The natives let fly a storm of arrows at the soldiers for this sacrilege; and to ensure their safety, Cortes had the chiefs and principal personages seized and held as hostages. If the attack was not instantly stopped, he declared, they should all forfeit their lives. His firmness, as usual, had its effect, and quiet was restored; which was made more lasting by the fact that the people, to their great astonishment, saw that their

supposed gods paid not the slightest attention to the insult offered them. Perhaps, after all, the Christian gods were more powerful! They listened, therefore, with great respect, when Father Bartolome tried to explain, through Marina, the principles of Christianity; they consented to have the blood cleaned away from their temples, a cross and an altar erected, and an image of the Virgin and Child placed on the latter. The temple was filled with roses and other sweet flowers, brought by the willing Indians, and some of the very priests who had officiated before at the horrible cannibalistic orgies changed their black robes for white, cut off their blood-clotted hair, and consented to keep the temple as the Spaniards wished it. An old lame Spanish soldier was left to show them their new duties.

And now took place one of the most dramatic and daring acts of all history. Cortes knew that there was still danger of mutiny among his men; in fact, he had just had to quell one, and execute two of the leaders. As long as the ships remained, ready to carry them home, there would be trouble. The only thing that remained, then, was to destroy the ships! And this Cortes actually persuaded his officers and his men to do. In spite of the fact that the ships were all that stood between them and ruin, if the Indians decided to turn against them, the Spaniards calmly ran them aground and burnt them. One only was left, which was sent away to carry to the King of Spain the presents of gold

and an account of all that had happened. Then Cortes, in a glowing speech, such as he well knew how to make, reminded his followers of the ostensible reasons for this step: that the hundred sailors of the ships would now swell their ranks. If any were so cowardly that they still wished to return to Cuba, they might go in the one vessel about to sail. For the rest, they would advance, to the glory of God and the Emperor!

Again he had touched the right chord in his soldiers' hearts.

"What sort of Spaniards are we, not to want to push ahead, but to stop where there are no hardships or fighting?" exclaimed Bernal Diaz.

The very soldiers who had been on the verge of mutiny were loudest in cheering, and all with one accord shouted,

"On to Mexico!"

CHAPTER VIII

ON TO MEXICO

On the sixteenth of August, 1519, Cortes and his men began their march over the mountains towards the capital they were forbidden to enter, and the monarch who could crush them with one decisive word of command to his subjects.

Oh, for a "movie" of this little band on their way through the steep mountain passes—the handful of mounted officers, handsome in light coats of mail or well-fitting doublets and hose, with nodding feathers in their caps, managing to perfection their proudly stepping horses—then the men, four hundred or so, a bronzed, hard, dirty crew, some of them with lowering, discontented faces, others all eagerness to push ahead and get their share of Montezuma's treasures—but all of them, whatever their inner feelings, controlled for the time by the determination of the sallow, politic, iron-spirited leader, Cortes. They dragged five or six small cannon with them, and were accompanied by a number of dogs, probably blood-hounds.

A small detachment was left to guard the Rich City

of the True Cross; and the rest advanced to Cempoalla, picking up here a large number of Totonacs, anxious to aid in the march of the wonderful *teules* against Montezuma.

Soon they had left behind the jungle-growths of the hot country, the *tierra calienta*. Gone were the palms, the tangle of vines, the strange fruits, gray hanging mosses, brilliant flowers and birds. They were climbing up to the temperate regions on the slopes of the mountains, where the air was cooler and more bracing, and they marched between groves of sturdy oak. Above them could be seen the pine forests, and, towering over all, the peak of Orizaba, covered with snow, and reddened with the fires of its burning craters.

As they proceeded, the nights grew bitterly cold, a dangerous change after the sultriness of the coast. The Spaniards suffered, and some of the coast natives died.

They passed through several small towns whose chiefs received them hospitably, sometimes because they were friends of the Totonacs, sometimes because they were marching to visit Montezuma. Cortes informed them all that he was the representative of the greatest sovereign in the world, and that they must give up their religion. In each town Father Bartolome de Olmedo erected a cross.

In about a week they had ascended the mountain slopes and reached the town of Xocotla, on the tableland of Mexico, or the plateau of Anahuac, as it is also called.

The chief, a very fat man, nicknamed by the Spaniards "The Trembler," because he quivered like a jelly, received them a trifle sullenly. When asked if he was Montezuma's vassal, he inquired, with great surprise, "And who is not a vassal of Montezuma?"

He told them of Montezuma's power and greatness, and of "the great and strong city of Mexico," which lay in the midst of waters, and could only be approached by drawbridges. This was the first definite information the Spaniards had had of the city of Mexico or Tenochtitlan. They were all, including Cortes, much astonished. "However, instead of being thereby disheartened, we only the more earnestly desired to try our fortune against the fortresses and bridges, for such is the very spirit of a Spanish soldier," says Bernal de Diaz.

The Totonac allies spread terror of the Spaniards among the people of this town. They pointed out their fierce dogs, their deadly cannon, their ferocious horses, nimble as deer. They added that the *teules* could read the very thoughts of others! How else had they been able to bring about the imprisonment of the tax-gatherers of the great Montezuma, and relieve the coast tribes of the necessity of paying tribute? Even Montezuma himself paid them deference and sent them presents.

So the rumors flew through the Indian camps, as dark heads whispered together, and dark eyes stole sidelong glances at the remarkable gods who had invaded their

country; and when the Totonacs closed with the hint that the strangers, like most gods, were fond of gifts, ornaments of gold, cotton clothes, and women to bake maize bread were soon forthcoming. Cortes accepted all graciously.

The soldiers, after feasting, went out to see the sights. Imagine their feelings, when they discovered at a certain spot in the township more than one hundred thousand skulls piled up "in the best order imaginable" in a public square, the rest of the bones belonging to the skulls decorating the other corners! On guard over all, three priests. The Spanish soldiers were brave, but the idea of being taken prisoner and sacrificed according to the horrible Aztec method was one which made the boldest toss uneasily of nights as he slept in his clothes, his weapons by his side.

There was a doubt now as to how to proceed. There were two roads to Mexico: one leading through the country of the Tlascallans, that mountain people who had been long at war with the Mexicans, and hated them with a bitter hatred because the captives taken in war were sacrificed every year to the Mexican gods; and one entirely in Mexican territory, going through Cholula, a town which might be called the "Boston of Mexico" on account of its great culture. It was here that the Fair God had tarried for twenty years before he had quitted Mexico forever.

The "Trembler" told the Spaniards to go through

Cholula, and offered to furnish guides to show them the way. The Totonac allies, on the other hand, advised against it, because the Cholulans, they said, were false and treacherous. Cortes followed their advice. He sent ahead four Totonacs as messengers to the Tlascallans, bearing a letter, a Flemish hat with a colored feather, and other gifts.

The ambassadors did not return as soon as expected; and Cortes with his men marched forward without waiting. They presently came to a strange obstruction, a stone wall nine feet high and twenty feet thick, extending right across the valley from mountain to mountain. The stones were cemented together so strongly that the wall could hardly be broken with pikes. The Xocotlans, a small number of whom had accompanied Cortes, told him that it had been built by the Tlascallans as a defense against Montezuma's forces. There was an opening in it, made by two semi-circular lines of wall overlapping each other so as to form a narrow passage, through which the Spanish warriors and their allies passed. There were no Tlascallans there to stop them.

Meanwhile, in the city of Tlascalla, the chief men of these warlike mountaineers were engaged in hot discussions regarding the entry of the Spaniards. The messengers had arrived, and had told them the history of the "gods" in Mexico, their invincibility, their terrible weapons and animals, how they had already freed the

Totonacs from Montezuma, and now desired the friendship of the Tlascallans, and to visit them.

Some of the lords were for welcoming the Spaniards as gods and children of the sun, come to fulfill the ancient prophecies; but one of them, the old Xicotencatl, the oldest of all and blind, said that to him they seemed more like monsters than like gods, monsters thrown up by the sea because it would no longer contain them! He advised against their being allowed to enter Tlascalla.

Finally a compromise was adopted. The Tlascallans decided to appear friendly and accept the gifts, but secretly to set on the Otomis, a barbarous people who were allies of theirs and lived on the borders of their territory, to attack the *teules*. If the Otomis failed, they could bear the blame; if they succeeded, the invaders would be kept out of Tlascalla.

Cortes and his men, who were in a valley, had not gone very far when a number of Indians appeared and attacked them. The Spaniards managed to repulse them and camped that night in a dry river bed, making their supper off animals resembling young dogs, which Bernal Diaz tells us made "very delicious joints."

The next morning they saw a still greater army of Indians approaching. Cortes assembled his men, and led them to battle, crying "Santiago!" (St. Jago, or St. James, the patron of Spain.) There was a fierce conflict. The Spaniards were many times over outnum-

bered by their yelling foes. The Indians, pretending to retreat, artfully led them into a mountain pass, and then above their heads the Spaniards saw hosts of warriors bearing the flag of Tlascalla, red and white, and adorned with a heron with outspread wings. They knew then that they were fighting, not the barbarous Otomis, as they had supposed, but the Tlascallans themselves. The ground was full of great holes, which made their cavalry useless, and stones and arrows came whizzing at their heads. But they pressed through the pass somehow, and reached another plain, where their cavalry and artillery worked havoc in the Indian ranks. The Spaniards kept closely together, while the artillery mowed down rows of the closely packed natives, and the charging horses struck terror to their souls.

After this battle, however, the Tlascallans never again regarded the horses as gods; for they succeeded in killing one, and next day parts of the animal were sent all over Tlascalla to show that it was only mortal. One reason that the Spaniards were not utterly destroyed was that the Indians were determined to capture them alive for the sacrifice. Finally Xicotenatl, the son of the old chief, drew off his forces, and the Spaniards, wounded and exhausted, retreated to the temples of a deserted village, where they passed an uncomfortable night.

The Tlascallan attacks stopped for a day or two, and Cortes sent messages of peace and friendship through some of his captured prisoners. These came back with

the message from General Xicotenatl that the Tlascallans would make peace after they had satiated themselves with the flesh of the Spaniards and sacrificed their blood and hearts to their gods! He would fight them next morning with a much greater army.

Consternation filled the Spanish camp. The soldiers spent the night praying and confessing to the two priests. It looked indeed as if they would need all their prayers.

Early the next morning the young Xicotenatl, as chivalrous as he was brave, sent Cortes three hundred turkeys and two hundred baskets of maize cakes in order, he said, that the Spaniards might not give hunger as an excuse for being defeated! It is supposed that the Spaniards feasted on them. At any rate, they marched out bravely, carrying with them their prized standard, the silk banner with its cross and flames. Even the badly wounded among them had to fight, but even so there were only about four hundred, besides the Totonac allies, against the countless hosts of the Tlascallans and Otomis. These awaited them a quarter of a mile away, covering the plain with a sea of dark heads and colored plumes, interspersed with the heron pennants.

But the very numbers of the enemy proved their undoing, for close packed as they were, the Spanish fire mowed them down in heaps, and there was such crowding and confusion they could not maneuver. Each

Spaniard, the terrible doom of sacrifice before his eyes, fought like the god or devil he was supposed to be; and the result was victory, or, at any rate, a withdrawal of the Tlascallan forces. Cortes, in a letter to the King, described the event thus simply:

"We mustered against them, and Our Lord was pleased so to aid us, that, in about four hours, we managed that they should no more molest us in our camp, although they still kept up some attacks; thus we kept fighting until it grew to be late, when they retired."

Miraculous as it may seem, the Spaniards only lost one man, although sixty men and all of the horses were wounded. These "wounds," made by arrows and clubs, instead of machine guns, were probably less disabling than they sound.

The Tlascallans next tried a night attack, but the Spaniards had posted sentries, who gave the alarm, and the cavalry routed the Indians by moonlight.

Cortes had to fight a worse foe than the Tlascallans, and that was the discontent of his own men. They were asking each other why he had got them into this tight place. He was like a simple character in an old story, Peter the Charcoal-burner, who "knew very well where he was, but didn't know how to get out." If he had gone mad, they need not do likewise. They would return to the sea-coast, and leave him to follow if he chose. These and many more remarks of the same kind were reported to Cortes as he tossed on his bed, stricken

with fever and ague; for even his iron health had been affected by the hardships they were enduring.

Finally a delegation from the discontented ones called on him in his tent to beg him to return to Vera Cruz before it was too late and they were all sacrificed to idols. Such rash things as he had done had never been heard of in history! It was a wonder they were not all destroyed.

Cortes, more sallow than ever with fever, hesitated not a moment for his answer. They must go on. God was on their side. Besides, if they retreated now, the Indians, both allies and foes, would despise them, and "the very stones of the ground would be raised up against them." "You must bear in mind," he went on, "that we are not come into this country to seek repose, but to fight valiantly whenever it may be necessary. Show yourselves brave soldiers as you have hitherto, for, next to God, all depends upon the valor of our arms."

The men still looked sullen. Cortes, dropping his mild manner, exclaimed angrily:

"Let me tell you then, it is better to die like brave warriors than to live as cowards!" and they were shamed into silence.

It is not strange that Cortes should have had some discontented ones among his followers, for many were not soldiers by profession, but business men and men

of property who had come to Mexico to enrich themselves rather than to fight.

Soon after this, the last of Xicotenatl's attacks having failed, that haughty general himself came, with other Tlascallan chiefs, to beg for peace. Clad in red and white cloaks of nequen, or hemp fiber, the mountaineers advanced to the tent of the white captain, whom they saluted, kissing their hands to the ground and waving pans of burning copal in his face. "General Xicotenatl," says Diaz, "was a tall man, broad shouldered and well built, with a large, fresh-colored face, full of scars, as if pitted with the small-pox. He may have been about thirty-five years of age, and was earnest and dignified in his deportment." We can listen to the speech of this officer of what has been called the first American republic with more sympathy than did Cortes, the loyal representative of an autocratic monarch.

The Tlascallans, said Xicotenatl, had fought as well as they knew how, day and night, to escape being conquered by the Spaniards, since it was their boast that they had never been subject to any one, not even the most powerful Montezuma or his ancestors. They had endured everything for the sake of their freedom. But now since all their efforts against the Spaniards had failed, they would become vassals of the King of the strangers rather than be totally destroyed. Here poor Xicotenatl gave the conqueror some presents, apologiz-

ing for their poverty on the plea that it was all the Aztecs had left them. All this Marina translated, her dark eyes flashing with pleasure because even this dreaded warrior had at last surrendered to her captain. Xicotenatl closed by delivering an invitation to the Spaniards to visit the Tlascallans in their capital city.

Cortes accepted Xicotenatl's offer of fealty, promising that he would visit his city later. He did not quite trust his new friends.

The Tlascallans departed, but not before they had seen with alarm that other visitors besides themselves were in the Spanish camp. These were some of Montezuma's officials, who had arrived a day or two earlier, and who, on their side, regarded Cortes' dealings with the Tlascallans with great disapproval. The Mexicans had come with a most humble message from Montezuma, who had heard of the success of the Spaniards against the Tlascallan hosts and had been disheartened by it. He would acknowledge the sovereignty of the King of Spain, and give whatever yearly tribute of gold, slaves and other valuables that monarch desired; but at the same time he made a last attempt to keep the Spaniards from coming to visit him by telling them that his city was very poor and lacking in provisions and they would suffer want. The Spaniards only laughed, knowing what they did of the riches of Mexico.

Still more visitors came to camp in these days, some from Montezuma and some from Tlascalla, among the

latter being old, blind Xicotencatl, father of the General, who had wished to destroy the strangers, but now felt of Cortes' face and figure, since he could not see him, and begged him in honeyed words to visit Tlascalla. It was he who first called Cortes "Malintzin," meaning Marina's captain, a name he came to be generally known by among the native tribes, because Marina was always in his tent interpreting when ambassadors called.

Cortes finally promised that he would visit Tlascalla if the natives would transport his artillery there, which they at once arranged to do. Thus the Spaniards set out for the mountain capital.

It seemed to them quite a splendid city, after their many weeks in the rough country, and they said it was larger than Granada, in Spain, with better shops, both for provisions and luxuries. There were even barber shops! Whether all this was true, or whether the Spaniards were a little dazzled by the strangeness of everything, and exhilarated beyond sober judgment by their recent successes, it is hard for us to decide. Certainly some of the scientists who have studied Mexican ruins think that no such remarkable towns as the Spanish describe ever existed in Mexico. On the other hand, one likes to give credit to people actually on the spot. I am certain that if any of these critical scientists had been with Cortes on his march they would have found Tlascalla a very delightful city, its houses most comfortable in comparison with the rough camps they

had endured, its gayly dressed natives who welcomed them with baskets of roses and clouds of incense a most delightful contrast to the same natives armed to the teeth and hurling stones and arrows at them.

The Spaniards were lodged in Xicotencatl's palace, where, in spite of Tlascallan remonstrances, they wisely kept their guard as usual.

In Tlascalla, Cortes learned still more of the size and grandeur of this Tenochtitlan which he proposed to conquer; and also how Montezuma was hated by most of the nations subject to him on account of his oppressions. Here also he heard for the first time of the strange legend which had helped so much his progress into the country: that, as the old chronicle puts it, "a certain god, to whom they paid great honors, had informed them that there would one time come from the rising of the sun, out of distant countries, a people who would rule over them." No wonder that the Spaniards were "all greatly astonished at this account, and inquired of each other in amazement, whether all that was told them could be true." Cortes was too politic not to put the legend to practical use at once. They had indeed come, he said, from the rising of the sun. The Emperor, his master, had purposely sent them, that they might become the brothers of the Tlascallans, and save them from eternal perdition!

As if they had not had enough hardships and danger, a party of these intrepid Spaniards under Diego de

Ordas attempted the ascent of Mount Popocatepetl, which was at that time in violent eruption. The accompanying natives soon became terrified and refused to go more than a short distance up the slope, but the Spaniards kept on until they had reached the snow, and were showered with hot lava and ashes. The cold was so intense and the burning showers so violent they did not quite reach the crater, but returned, carrying souvenirs of snow and icicles to their friends below. As a reward for this exploit, Diego de Ordas was afterwards allowed by the King to carry a smoking volcano on his coat of arms. At some spot on the road the Spaniards had their first glimpse of the City of Mexico and the lakes spread out on the plain.

During three weeks with the Tlascallans, weeks of feasting and present-giving (mostly on the Tlascallan side), Cortes at last received Montezuma's long-delayed invitation to visit him in his capital. The Mexican king told Cortes to come thither by way of Cholula, which was under Mexican control. The Tlascallans, on the other hand, said that Montezuma meant to have the Cholulans fall upon the Spaniards and destroy them, and advised another route. In spite of this, Cortes finally decided on the Cholula route, though he took all possible precautions. He and his men set out with a great number of Tlascallans, some of whom he presently sent away at the request of the Cholulans, but others camped outside the Cholulan city.

The Spaniards were welcomed in Cholula in the usual way, with bows, flowers, and incense. Before entering the town, Cortes read the Cholulans a letter drawn up in Spanish by his notary, calling upon them to pay allegiance to the Spanish King, on pain of being treated as rebels. The Cholulans of course understood not a word of this document; but this did not matter, in Cortes' eyes; they were made Spanish subjects by it all the same.

This town also seemed very beautiful to the Spaniards, and they noticed at once the great number of temples, more than a hundred, for Cholula was a center of religion, as befitted a city where the god Quetzalcoatl had passed twenty years. The largest temple was higher than any they had seen, higher even than the one they were to see in Mexico. At the beginning of their stay all was feasting and pleasure, yet even then the Spaniards thought they detected signs of treachery: piles of stones on the house-tops, holes in the streets dangerous to cavalry, and the stopping up of many streets and of the main highway out of town. On the third day of their visit the Cholulans ceased bringing provisions and looked at them, they thought, derisively. And then Marina told Cortes an alarming tale.

An old Cholulan woman, it seemed, had taken a fancy to her, and warned her that her people had received orders from Montezuma to fall upon all the Spaniards

that night or the next day. If Marina would escape, she must come home with her that evening.

Artful Marina thanked the old woman and promised to go, but said first she must pack her things, as she had many valuable golden trinkets. Instead of doing this, she came straight to Cortes.

Cortes had already been warned to somewhat the same effect by the Cempoallan allies and messages sent from the Tlascallans outside the city. The Cholulans, it seemed, were making war-sacrifices in the temples and sending away their women and children. As soon as Cortes had heard Marina's story, he had the old woman and two other Cholulans in camp seized and brought before him, and by cross-questioning convinced himself that his suspicions were facts. They told him that Montezuma, who had at first told the Cholulans to receive the Spaniards hospitably, had afterwards changed his mind and sent orders to fall upon them; that great numbers of Mexican warriors were hiding in the mountains just outside town to aid in the affair.

Cortes called his officers together. They were of many minds; but Cortes, as usual, quickly formed his plan of action. To strike the Cholulans before they could strike him was his one idea; and he was absolutely pitiless in carrying it out. He sent word to the Cholulan chiefs, telling them that he planned to leave their town the next day, and wished the principal lords to assemble in his quarters early the next morning for

a conference, bringing with them 2000 Cholulans to carry the Spanish baggage out of the country. This practice of lending men to carry the baggage of departing guests for some distance was a hospitable custom of all the native tribes of Mexico.

The Cholulans unsuspectingly agreed, and very early the next morning they entered the temple courtyard next to the Spanish quarters, whose high stone walls had seen many sacrifices, but none so dreadful as the one which followed. For the orders which Cortes had ruthlessly given his soldiers were as ruthlessly carried out; and the Spaniards with drawn swords fell upon the unarmed and defenseless Cholulans, till the courtyard pavement ran red with blood. Of all the natives who entered so unsuspectingly, scarcely any escaped alive, for the three entrances were all guarded with soldiers and guns. Among the dead were many of the most important chiefs, who had come to confer with Cortes. Meanwhile the Tlascallans outside the city took occasion to rush in and slaughter their ancient enemies in the streets, and drag numbers of them away for sacrifice. Altogether in that bloody morning more than 3000 Cholulans lost their lives; and Cortes was so little ashamed of this that he took pains to report the number to the Spanish king. At last, yielding to frenzied entreaties of the remaining nobles and priests, Cortes ordered the massacre stopped; the Tlascallans were made to give up their prisoners and leave the city.

This act was the most cruel one of Cortes' career. Nothing can excuse it, not even the plea of self-defense against treachery. If the evidence against the Cholulans was really so overwhelming as he makes out—and there is a good deal of doubt about this—he could have held the Cholulans in the courtyard as hostages until assured of a safe passage out of town. Bernal Diaz tries to make things better by saying that at any rate the affair showed the Cholulans that their gods were of no use, and so put them in a better frame of mind to accept Christianity! He does not say what idea the Cholulans had of the Christian god who had apparently inspired the massacre of 3000 defenseless people.

But Cortes probably spent little time in considering the rights and wrongs of the case; or if he did, thought in his positive way that the Cholulans deserved their fate as rebels and traitors to the King and the Faith they had never acknowledged. He had no pity; his policy was terror; and it worked! Two of the captive lords whose lives had been spared were sent to reassure the terrified inhabitants and make them return to the city, for most of them had fled; and within twenty days life in the city resumed its normal course, and hostility to the white men did not dare to show itself.

Meanwhile Montezuma was growing more and more distracted at the doings of these terrible white men. He spent his days consulting his lords and astrologers, sending messengers to Cortes to try and keep him from

coming, and making preparations in case he did come. None of the messages, of course, had any effect on the determined Spaniard.

On the first of November the little army with its Indian allies began its march again, up the steep pass which led to the Mexican plateau. As they gained the highest point and came in view of the gleaming lakes and lake towns, their excitement was even greater than that of the Israelites when they saw the Promised Land. Surely nothing like this magnificent country had ever been dreamed of in the Old World! The dangers that confronted them were forgotten, and they thought only of enjoying themselves in Montezuma's palaces.

At every town through which they passed, chiefs greeted them with messages from the undecided King, vainly begging them go and leave him in peace. To each, Cortes gave answer that he was charged by his master, King Charles, to give a message to Montezuma in person; that he meant him and the Mexicans not harm but good, and that after reaching the city, he would leave it as soon as the Mexicans desired. All of which promises were worth not even so much as a "scrap of paper" in modern times.

The final official who tried to stop Cortes was the young King of Texcuco, Cacamatzin, who came out to meet him in a gorgeous litter covered with plumes and jewels. He and his nobles all fell on their knees protesting against Cortes' advance, but of course to no avail.

Next the Spaniards reached the lovely little lake-town of Cuitlahuac, now Tlahua, and called by the Spaniards Venezuela, or little Venice, on account of its watery streets. They saw here the famous floating gardens, filled with vegetables and flowers, which the natives moved by long poles about the surface of the lake.

Their last stop was at the fine city of Iztapalapan, seven miles from Mexico, which was noted for its botanical and zoölogical gardens, far ahead of anything in Europe at that time, and its fine stone houses with lovely courtyards and grounds. "Everything was so charming and beautiful that we could find no words to express our astonishment," Bernal Diaz exclaims. After the Conquest not a stone of this beautiful city was standing. They were royally treated here, and given many valuable presents of gold and embroidered garments, but nothing could keep them from pressing on to Mexico.

CHAPTER IX

KIDNAPPING A MONARCH

On the morning of the eighth of November, 1519, the Spaniards were on the causeway which was one of three to connect Tenochtitlan with the mainland, and so wide that eight of the Spanish cavalry could ride abreast on it. On all sides, in the road, and in canoes on the lake, a crowd of Aztecs gazed at the descendants of the god who had at last, as they believed, carried out his promise. At the entrance to the city they were greeted by one thousand principal citizens, with salutations and kissing of hands to the bare earth; and then, after crossing a drawbridge, they saw approaching in a gorgeous litter, none other than the great Montezuma, escorted by two hundred of his courtiers.

Never has there been a more impressive scene in the history of the American continent than this meeting between the Emperor of all Mexico and the Spanish adventurer. The picturesque surroundings, the silver-towered city rising from the gleaming lake, the countless hosts of gayly-dressed subjects watching in awed silence, the magnificence of Montezuma and his train,

the bronze, war-worn, yet fiery appearance of the Spaniards;—all these seem like a page from the "Arabian Nights" rather than sober history. The Spaniards, we may be sure, realized that they were living a romance of the first order; and their hearts beat high with triumph, as with swords clanking and horses prancing, they advanced into this City of Legend.

Montezuma alighted from his litter and approached, leaning upon the arms of two obsequious lords, between two files of bare-footed though splendidly dressed courtiers, who stood silent with down-cast eyes as he passed. Cortes alighted from his horse and impetuously made as if to embrace the Aztec King, but the lords, aghast at such familiarity, prevented, and they and their royal master also went through the customary salute of kissing their own hands and touching them to the ground. Cortes then took a collar from his neck and gave it to Montezuma with a truly princely air. The fact that it was made principally of glass beads did not interfere at all with the flourish with which he presented it to the monarch who had given him so much jewelry of surpassing value. Montezuma signed to his servants, who presently came with some beautifully worked golden necklaces for Cortes in return. Meanwhile the procession started back towards town, Cortes being escorted by Montezuma's brother. At every step the wonder of the Spaniards grew, as they saw the beautiful houses, streets, markets and temples of this great

American city. Presently they reached the palace which Montezuma had assigned to the Spaniards, where he left them to be served with a delicious repast. In the afternoon he returned with his retinue for another stately visit; during which he made Cortes the following remarkable speech, which I quote in shortened form from Cortes' own report of it.

We have known since a long time, from the chronicles of our forefathers, that neither I, nor those who inhabit this country, are descendants from the aborigines of it, but from strangers, who came to it from very distant regions; and we also hold, that our race was brought to these parts by a lord, whose vassals they all were and who returned to his native country. . . . And we have always held that his descendants would come to subjugate this country and us, as his vassals; and according to the direction from which you say you come, which is where the sun rises, and from what you tell us of your great lord, or king, who has sent you here, we believe and hold for certain that he is our rightful sovereign. . . .

Since you are in your rightful place and in your own homes, rejoice and rest, free from all the trouble of the journey and the wars you have had. . . . All that I possess, you may have whenever you wish.

Bernal Diaz describes Montezuma as about forty years old (he was really fifty-six), fairly tall, slender, well-proportioned, with a complexion somewhat lighter than the average Indian. He was very clean, the Spanish soldier tells us, and adds, with a touch of awe, that he took a bath every single day! He never wore his garments more than once.

Cortes soon returned Montezuma's visit with all ceremony in the royal palace. He took with him Pedro de Alvarado, nicknamed by the Tlascallans the "Sun," on account of his light hair and florid complexion, handsome appearance and bright smile, and other officers and some soldiers, among whom was the observant Bernal Diaz.

Cortes began his discourse to the Emperor with a long explanation of the Christian religion, and urged him to adopt it instead of his own.

Montezuma listened, astonished at what he considered the stranger's ill-breeding. He replied, in a tone which discouraged even the irrepressible Cortes for the time.

"I know what you have stated about the Cross and everything else in the towns you have passed through. We however have kept silent, as the gods we adore were adored in bygone ages by our ancestors, and we once and for all acknowledge them to be good gods! Let us talk no longer on this subject!"

He then went on to say pleasantly that he had opposed the entrance of the Spaniards because his people were afraid of them; that since he had become acquainted he had formed a very high opinion of them, and was ready to share with them all that he possessed. He made a little fun of the people of Tlascalla for telling Cortes that he was a god.

"You must just think of that as I think of the light-

ning and burning flames which you are said to whirl about in all directions!" he said.

He gave them all rich presents; more than a thousand dollars' worth of gold to the officers; to each soldier a fine gold neck-chain. "Everything he gave away was given with the best of good will, and an air of dignity such as you might expect in so great a monarch," says Bernal Diaz.

On another day a visit to the market and one of the great temples was arranged, at the request of Cortes. "We were perfectly astonished at the vast numbers of people, the profusion of merchandise exposed for sale, and at the good police and order that reigned throughout," Bernal says. As we have already seen the market through Aztec eyes in the chapter on old Anahuac, we will not linger there with the Spaniards, but rejoin them, when, after admiring to the utmost, they were taken by their Aztec guides to the great temple of the Tlatelolco quarter, where Montezuma awaited them. He was already on the summit, sacrificing, but sent his officers down to help the Spaniards make the ascent of the one hundred and fourteen steps.

"Nothing ever tires me or my companions," Cortes declared, with a touch of boastfulness unusual in him.

From the summit the Spaniards gained a wonderful view of the outspread city; but they could not help thinking, as they noticed the three causeways, each guarded by drawbridges, which were the only exits from

the city, how greatly they were at the mercy of this bland but possibly deceitful monarch. This fear was driven away, for the time, by their horror at seeing the sanctuaries, reeking with blood and the smoke from burning human hearts. Cortes had the audacity to tell Montezuma that his idols were not gods, but devils, and asked permission to cast them down and erect a statue to the Virgin in their place. Montezuma, much offended, replied,

"Had I thought, Malintzin, that you would offer such an insult, I would not have shown you my gods. I beg you to dishonor them no further!"

Even Cortes felt that he had gone too far, and, changing his tone, shortly after took leave of his host, who remained behind to make further sacrifices to appease his insulted deities. He gave permission, however, to the Spaniards to fit up a chapel in their own quarters. While the altar for this chapel was being erected, the carpenter discovered a hidden door leading to a room containing a great quantity of gold, precious stones, rich stuffs, shields and arms—in fact, the hoarded treasure left by Montezuma's grandfather, the Emperor Axayacatl. Cortes was notified of the discovery, ordered the door blocked up again, and nothing to be said.

The Spaniards were enjoying themselves in this hospitable city of Tenochtitlan, but they felt far from secure. What chance would they have for their lives if Montezuma should suddenly order the drawbridges to

be raised and the inhabitants to fall upon them? Cortes talked the matter over with his officers, and then and there worked out the wildest, maddest scheme that ever made the Muse of History appear first cousin to a moving picture director! This was none other than to seize Montezuma and keep him a prisoner in the Spanish quarters.

On the morning of Monday, November 14, a subdued thrill of excitement ran through the temple where the Spaniards lodged. The men were armed, the horsemen were exercising their horses, the artillery was ready for action: but all these preparations were hidden as much as possible so that the natives would not notice anything unusual. Presently Cortes with five or six of his captains rode through the courtyard and out into the street, a number of soldiers following them in small parties, as if by accident, but really to keep the street open behind them. Cortes and the officers rode to the royal palace, where they were expected for an interview.

As usual, Cortes had a pretext for the part he intended to play. You will remember that he had left a colony at Vera Cruz. During the march to Mexico he had once or twice sent back word of his own progress and received messages from them. Everything had gone well there until Cortes' arrival in Mexico. Since then, he had had bad news. The Totonacs had revolted and killed six Spaniards, among them the governor of the colony, Juan de Escalante; and Cortes had heard

that they had done so on account of direct orders from Montezuma.

Montezuma received the party unsuspectingly, and in his usual generous style gave them handsome presents of gold. Nor was this enough. He bestowed upon Cortes the hand of one of his daughters in marriage, and gave daughters of other lords to Cortes' captains. In Mexican eyes polygamy was no crime; and the Spaniards do not seem to have laid any stress upon what their own faith taught them in this regard.

It would have been hard for most people to accept these presents and then turn about and make things unpleasant for the giver; but Cortes does not seem to have had any trouble in doing so. "After conversing with Montezuma lightly on pleasant subjects," as Bernal Diaz puts it, he suddenly brought up the subject of the rebellion at Vera Cruz. He said that he did not believe Montezuma was responsible, but he thought he ought to make an inquiry into the affair at once and have the guilty parties punished.

Montezuma declared he knew nothing of the matter. He took a seal ring from his finger, one that was only used with messages of the highest importance, and dispatched his officers with it to the coast to inquire into the affair. This prompt obedience to Cortes' wishes did not soften the latter in the least. He went on to say that though he was grateful to the Emperor for the diligence he showed in punishing the guilty ones, still

he, Cortes, was responsible to the Emperor of Spain for the murdered Spaniards, and therefore he wished Montezuma to come quietly with him to the Spanish quarters until it was found out who was guilty.

At this astounding proposal, which was duly translated by Marina, Montezuma started, and a look of extreme astonishment and indignation crossed his face.

"Do not be offended or pained," said Cortes. "You will not be a prisoner in my apartments; you will be quite free to do as you choose. You may have any room you like, your own attendants, and every one will do exactly as you order."

This attempt to gild the cage he was to be shut up in did not reassure the alarmed Emperor. Seeing this, Cortes added sternly:

"If you make any alarm or call out to your attendants, you are a dead man! I and my officers will see to that!"

Montezuma was speechless with terror, at first, but finally he summoned up courage. "He was quite astonished we should presume to take him prisoner and lead him away out of his palace against his wishes! No one had a right to demand that of him!"

Cortes answered quietly, and he and Montezuma argued about the matter for half an hour or more. Finally Juan de Velasquez, one of Cortes' officers, exclaimed,

"What is the use of wasting so many words? He

must either quietly follow us, or we will cut him down at once. Tell him that; for on this depends the safety of our lives. We must be firm, or we are lost!"

Montezuma could not understand the words, but understood Velasquez' scowl and loud, harsh tone only too well, and asked what he said.

Marina interpreted, adding: "Great monarch, if I may be allowed to give you advice, make no further difficulties, but follow them at once to their quarters. I am confident they will pay you every respect, and treat you as becomes a powerful monarch. But if you continue to refuse, they will cut you down on the spot."

In vain Montezuma asked if they would not take his son and his two daughters instead. "What will the grandees of my empire say," he asked weakly, "if they see me taken prisoner?"

His feeble remonstrances were of no avail. As we read the story, we feel as if poor, bewildered Montezuma must have indeed been hypnotized by the stronger will of the desperate Cortes. Else why should he have let himself be kidnapped in his own castle, in the midst of thousands of his own people? Sadly he ordered his "rich and splendid" sedan to be brought, sadly he stepped into it, and sadly, with tears, even, his attendants obeyed his orders to bear him from his castle. They were told that Montezuma in going with the Spaniards for a visit was obeying the command of the war-god; but they knew that all was not as it should be;

Montezuma II and the Temple of Human Sacrifice.

and the people, when they saw the royal litter surrounded by armed white men in the streets, gathered in crowds and made rebellious movements. Montezuma quieted them and told them to disperse. So, of his own free will, apparently, he was carried to the temple he had assigned to the invaders.

As soon as Cortes had Montezuma safely in his power, he took pains to make the monarch feel the change as little as possible. He was allowed to see his nobles every day, to govern as usual, to have his own attendants, who carried on the same pomp and ceremonial and served the same luxurious meals as at his own court. Bernal Diaz says that the Emperor appeared happy and contented. We can hardly believe it. He must have spent sad hours thinking of his former freedom, and recalling those promises Cortes had given so many times on his way to Mexico, when he assured the Emperor by his messages that he was coming to do him nothing but good.

In about two weeks the chiefs of the Totonacs, who had headed the outbreak, were brought to Mexico. They were loyal to Montezuma and would not acknowledge that he had had anything to do with the uprising. Cortes sentenced them all to be burnt. While this cruel execution was being carried out in the courtyard, he caused Montezuma to be put in irons, lest he should make some disturbance. It was a terrible humiliation for the forlorn King, who wept bitterly as his devoted

courtiers, weeping also, knelt and held the chains so that they should not hurt him. Truly, then, "the iron entered into his soul." When the executions were over, Cortes himself came and took the chains off, with the hypocritical assurance that "he loved him more than a brother!" Montezuma pretended to believe him. Nothing is more pathetic, under the circumstances, than the way in which Montezuma strove to keep on good terms with the man who was bullying him out of his kingdom. Cortes tells his King,

"So good was my treatment of him . . . that I offered him his liberty, praying him to return to his palace; but he told me each time that he was contented here, and that he did not wish to go, because nothing that he wished was wanting, more than in his own palace; whereas it might happen that, if he went back, the lords of the country, his vassals, would importune him to do things, in spite of himself, which would be contrary to his own wish."

Indeed, Montezuma probably felt that he had alienated himself forever from his own friends by his weak and cowardly conduct, and that his only hope now lay with Cortes. He continued making the greatest possible efforts to appear happy in his miserable position. He played games with Cortes for golden counters, giving his winnings to the Spaniards in the room, while Cortes gave his to Montezuma's nephew, who was there, and his servants. The handsome, agreeable Alvarado

kept score for Cortes, and was apt, Bernal Diaz says, to mark one more than he ought. Montezuma caught him at it, and mentioned the fact politely; at which the soldiers in the room burst out laughing, for Alvarado was notorious for cheating.

Sometimes Montezuma took five or six of the Spaniards and went on various pleasure-expeditions about the vicinity, to the parks or other places of amusement, and the soldiers always liked to go on these trips because they were given handsome presents by the monarch. He was, in fact, always generous and winning, and the Spaniards, both officers and men, became very fond of him.

The allied princes and nobles did not take Montezuma's imprisonment as calmly as he. The young King of Texcuco, Cacamatzin, showed his resentment by refusing to come to the capital. He was shortly after deposed through civil war in his kingdom, and Cortes, who by that time had taken over all Montezuma's power, appointed his brother Cuicuitzcatzin in his place. The scene in which Montezuma called his lords together and informed them that henceforth they must render to Cortes the tribute and service they had formerly rendered to him was a very affecting one. All shed tears, and even the Spaniards felt compassion, Bernal Diaz says. Montezuma excused his abdication by repeating the old story of Quetzalcoatl.

Cortes lost no time in sending his men to collect

tributes of gold from Montezuma's princes. His deputies returned with bars and sheets of gold, jewels and much beautiful featherwork. According to the original agreement drawn up between Cortes and the soldiers, the Emperor was entitled to one fifth of this, and Cortes to a fifth; but as there was now much grumbling over the division, Cortes gave up his share to be divided among the poorer soldiers. Meanness was never one of his faults. He also sent Spaniards with Indian guides to hunt for gold-mines; inquired for a better harbor than the one at Vera Cruz; heard of one on the banks of the Coatzacoalco River, and sent Juan Velasquez de Leon with fifty men to make a settlement there.

Several months passed in all these activities; and still Cortes postponed the accomplishment nearest his heart, the cleansing of the great temple, directly opposite the Spanish quarters, where they could daily see human sacrifices offered. He was only prudent to do so; and if he had considered only his own safety and that of his men, he would have postponed it indefinitely; but he was too much of a missionary for that. One day, after he had been in Mexico about five months, he could no longer endure the thought of the human sacrifices still being offered. For the first time since he had been there with Montezuma he paid a visit to the temple, with ten of his men.

"O God, why dost Thou permit the devil to be so honored in this land!" he exclaimed, when he saw again

the hideous, bejeweled idols and the tokens of sacrifice. He called the priests together and gave them a sermon on the Christian religion. The priests defended their own, when Cortes became so enraged that he began smashing the idols right and left, "with such magnificent fury that Andrea de Tapia afterwards declared that he seemed like a supernatural being." After he had made a thorough job of it, in spite of the frantic efforts of the priests and Montezuma himself, who hastened to the spot to stop him, he had the temple cleansed and freshly plastered and two Christian altars set up, one to the Virgin and one to St. Christopher.

An odd incident occurred soon after the establishment of the new religion. Rain was much needed, and the Indians, who had lost their own gods, asked the Christian priests to pray to their God for it. Cortes took it upon himself to promise magnificently that their prayer should be answered. Mass was said, and a religious procession, such as is often seen in Roman Catholic countries, set out through the streets, under a cloudless sky. They had not gone far when a perfect downpour of rain occurred, and the streets were flooded ankle deep!

As the Spaniards came to be better known, however, they began to lose in the public estimation. It became very plain that they were not gods, but human beings like the natives themselves, only a little better equipped, with their steel swords, muskets and cannon. Even the

dreaded pawing, charging horses were seen to be merely well-trained and extremely docile animals. Added to this lessened respect with which the Indians had come to regard the strangers came the news of their desecration of the temple. From that moment the storm-cloud began to gather over the Spanish heads. Priests and Indian officials came and went on secret errands to Montezuma. Marina warned Cortes that the Mexicans were about to attack the Tlascallan allies; and such was the uneasiness in the Spanish camp that the soldiers never took off their armor day and night.

One day Montezuma, still faithful to his captors, sent for Cortes and the officers and told them that the gods had counseled that the Spaniards must either be put to death or driven away. He earnestly warned them to leave the city before it was too late. Cortes was perplexed. His forces were divided: Velasquez de Leon was away on the Coatzacoalco River with more than a hundred men; Rodrigo Rangel with others was laying out a plantation for the Spanish king near Chinantla, and several small parties of Spaniards were looking for gold mines throughout the provinces. He did not wish to leave without these men, so he sought to gain time by telling Montezuma that he could not leave the country without building ships, and asked him to furnish workmen to go with the Spaniards to build them at Vera Cruz. Montezuma agreed, and at once sent carpenters to the coast.

Only a week after they had gone, several Spanish ships were sighted from Vera Cruz by Sandoval, who had taken Juan de Escalante's place there, and by the Indian coast governors, who at once sent word of the event by picture-writings to Montezuma. For the time, Cortes was ignorant of this. He only noticed that Montezuma seemed unusually cheerful; and he little guessed that it was because the imprisoned Emperor had learned of newcomers who were apparently enemies of Cortes.

In a few days, Montezuma decided to tell Cortes of the arrival of the ships, and then all was rejoicing in the Spanish camps, for they thought at first they were friendly and had come to help them. But doubt came with second thought. They remembered Velasquez' hostility, and wondered if these ships might not be sent by him.

Let us go back for a while to this same touchy Velasquez, who you may be sure had been far from pleased when he heard of the way Cortes had cleverly cast off his authority by having himself elected by the soldiers as the representative of the King direct. He had lodged complaints against Cortes with the colonial authorities in Spain, and managed to make things very unpleasant for the agents, Puertocarrere and Montejo, whom Cortes had sent to Spain with the letters and treasure for the King. These, however, managed at last to gain an audience with King Charles. The gold and

other rich gifts made a good impression, but the King had been prejudiced by the complaints against Cortes he had heard, and was moreover much preoccupied with his foreign affairs (he was getting himself made Emperor of Germany), so he did not take any steps to reward the messengers or to help Cortes. Meanwhile Velasquez in Cuba decided to send an expedition to capture Cortes and bring him back to Cuba. He chose as commander for it Panfilo de Narvaez. Narvaez started off with eighteen ships and about nine hundred men, including eighty horsemen. These were the ships Sandoval had seen. Narvaez sent some priests ashore with a message to Sandoval to cast off his allegiance to Cortes, the traitor.

Sandoval would have nothing to do with the messengers.

"Sir priests, you choose your words badly, speaking of *traitors;* all of us here are better servants of his Majesty than are Diego Velasquez and this man, your captain," he told them. When the priests replied sharply, he grew so enraged that he packed them on the backs of Indians and ordered them carried to Cortes in Mexico without delay! He sent also a letter explaining the situation.

When the priests thus ignominiously arrived before Cortes, the latter released them at once and treated them so kindly that they were immediately won over to his side. They told him everything about Narvaez and

how he was seeking to prejudice against Cortes not only the Spaniards but the coast natives. Cortes saw that the only thing to do was to fight. The country was too small for both him and Narvaez. He took all the men now with him except eighty whom he left with the blond, handsome Pedro de Alvarado to guard Montezuma, the treasure and the Spanish quarters. Those with him numbered about ninety-two. On the way down to the coast he received a few reinforcements from parties whom he had sent out to explore the country, also two hundred Indians with long, copper-tipped lances from Chinantla, and even some of Narvaez' own men whom he met and won over on the way.

Cortes' allies, the Tlascallans, refused to join him. They would fight with him against Indians, but not against white men with horses and cannon.

Not far from the coast Cortes drew up his men by the side of a river and made them one of his stirring speeches. He reminded them of all they had suffered to win these lands for his Majesty, and now, he said, "Panfilo Narvaez comes tearing along like a mad dog, to destroy us all! . . . Up to this moment we have fought to defend our lives, now we shall fight valiantly for our lives and honor!"

Plans for the night attack on Cempoalla, where Narvaez now had his quarters, were carefully laid, and each man knew what he had to do. Some were to capture Narvaez' cannon; among these was one Pizarro, "who at

that time was a daring young fellow," Bernal Diaz tells us, "but in those days as little known to the world as Peru itself." Sandoval with some of the men was to arrest Narvaez. Even Marina had her part, which was to guard the horses and baggage left behind at the brook, with the help only of a small page.

It was a hot, rainy night, black as pitch. They had first to cross the deep, swollen stream, a dangerous matter, in which many of the men were nearly drowned, but they accomplished it successfully. On the other side they ran across two of Narvaez' scouts, captured one, but the other escaped to give the alarm. Cortes and his men therefore pushed forward even faster to surprise Narvaez before the scout reached him. Yet in spite of their haste they found time to dismount and recite prayers with their priest, Father Bartolome. Then they ran on. Faint lights came from a building ahead of them, the temple where Narvaez' men had their quarters. The sentinels posted to guard it fled before the onrush of men in the darkness. Yells and cries broke the stillness. Narvaez and his men awoke from their sleep to find Cortes' soldiers swarming up the temple steps. The sparks from their matchlocks mingled with the lights of countless fireflies, and the attacked camp thought the enemy much more numerous than they were. To add to their confusion, one of Cortes' soldiers threw a lighted brand upon the thatched roof of the temple, and soon the straw was in a blaze.

Cortes rode here and there directing operations, in full armor, and dripping with perspiration.

Soon the cry arose, "Victory! victory! Narvaez is fallen! Long live the Emperor and General Cortes!"

Narvaez was not dead, but had been captured and had lost an eye in the struggle. When his wound had been dressed by a surgeon and he was brought before Cortes, he said, in his arrogant way,

"You have much reason, Senor Cortes, to thank Fortune for having given you such an easy victory, and placed me in your power."

"The least important deed that I have accomplished in this country, was to capture you!" was Cortes' biting answer.

He had certainly cause to feel jubilant, however, for now he had a new fleet, a new army and fresh stores of munitions to carry out his plans. Narvaez' soldiers went over to him without any trouble, as he was a much more popular commander than their recent master, and they hoped that they too would gain golden collars like the ones his men were now wearing. The Cempoalla Indians were really the worst sufferers from the conflict. The fat chief had been wounded during the assault of the temple, the greater part of their town had been destroyed, and they were dying like flies from the small-pox, which had its first start in Mexico from a Cuban negro with Narvaez who was suffering from the disease.

But the content of the Spaniards did not last long. "Trouble and sorrow followed peace and joy," as Bernal Diaz puts it. News came from Mexico that the Mexicans had risen as one man and were besieging Alvarado's garrison in their quarters!

CHAPTER X

THE REVOLT OF THE AZTECS

Cortes, with all his men, old and new, at once began the march all the long way over the mountains back to the capital. The Tlascallans were friendly as before, but could give them little news of the cause of the trouble in Mexico. The Spaniards hastened on, entering the valley by the northern route which led through the rival town of Texcuco. As they descended the mountains into the valley, they noticed that the natives were cold and unfriendly. Still greater was the change when at last, with anxious hearts, they hurried over the causeway into the Aztec city. No welcoming parties met them, as before; they marched through streets as silent and deserted as those of the dead. But they reached safely the palace of Axayacatl where the Spanish had their quarters, the great gates were thrown eagerly open to receive them, and their friends inside embraced them as their deliverers. Montezuma, also, came to meet Cortes with sad and anxious face; but the Spanish general repulsed him coldly. Most unjustly,

he blamed him for the disturbance; but soon he found that the fault had been all Alvarado's.

That blond and beautiful being, the "Sun," had ordered his soldiers to fall upon a great number of Mexicans as they were innocently celebrating the feast of May in a temple courtyard by his own permission, and slaughter them right and left. The flower of the Aztec nobility fell that cruel day in the courtyard which was turned into a shambles. Alvarado had no other excuse than a rumor he claimed to have heard that the Mexicans were planning a revolt.

The Aztecs had risen with a fury and a determination of which the Spaniards had never believed them capable. The whole city besieged the Spanish quarters in a howling, fighting mob. They might have succeeded in taking the place by storm, if Montezuma had not mounted the battlements and begged them to stop, for the sake of his own safety. At that they quieted somewhat, but only to change their attack into a siege. They surrounded the palace, and the Spaniards could neither go out nor could food and water be brought to them. This was the state of affairs when Cortes and his men reached there.

When Cortes heard of Alvarado's appalling deed from his own lips, his face grew dark with wrath, and he exclaimed,

"You have done badly. You have been false to your trust. Your conduct has been that of a madman!"

Still, even he did not think that the Mexicans were as determined as they were. But as day after day passed, and the army outside ever increased, the Spaniards saw that their condition was desperate. They learned that the drawbridges were raised, cutting off their retreat from the city, and wherever they looked outside their walls they saw masses of warriors, in the streets, on the roofs of the houses, thronging the temples. From these high positions, arrows, stones and firebrands fell continuously into the Spanish quarters.

The Spanish used their guns and cannon for firing from behind their walls; but though they mowed the Indians down in great numbers, still more came up to take their places. The Aztecs felt the loss of hundreds of their number less than the Spaniards that of one man. Cortes led a daring sortie outside the palace walls. The cavalry cut down the natives, while the infantry followed to complete the work; the Aztecs were not discouraged. Fresh battalions swarmed in from all the side streets, men in canoes on the canals dragged the Spaniards into the water, warriors on the house-tops hurled great stones upon them. The Spaniards attempted to set fire to these buildings, but the fire could not spread on account of the canals between. At last the Spaniards retreated. They had been victorious and driven back the enemy at every point, but what did that matter, since the enemy did not know when they were beaten?

The Aztecs, following their custom, did not attack at night, but all night long their shrill cries rang upon the air just outside the Spanish walls.

"The gods have delivered you at last into our hands," they cried. "Our war-god is demanding his victims. The stone of sacrifice is ready! The knives are sharpened. And the cages are waiting for the lean Tlascallans, who must be fattened for the festival!"

Cortes determined to ask Montezuma to speak to his people and ask them to stop. Montezuma was very unwilling.

"Why does Malinche now turn to me, to me who am tired of life and could wish never again to hear his name mentioned, for it is he who has plunged me into all this misery?" he inquired bitterly. "I will neither see nor hear anything more of this man. I put no longer any faith in his deceitful words, his promises and his lies!" Yet he finally did as Cortes asked.

Guarded by Spaniards, and wearing his imperial mantle of white and blue, clasped by a great green stone like an emerald, and his golden sandals and tiara, the unhappy monarch mounted to the roof of his father's palace, now the Spanish quarters, from which he could easily be seen and heard by the besieging mob. As soon as the Mexicans saw him they stopped fighting and fell on the ground in their old-time humility. All waited in silence for him to speak.

They were hoping for words befitting their first war-

chief, but they were disappointed. Montezuma told them again the unlikely story that he had taken up his abode with the Spaniards of his own free will. He begged them to lay down their arms and let the Spaniards depart.

Yells and groans of derision went up from the populace.

"Base Aztec, woman, coward!" they shouted. "You are a woman-slave to the Spaniards, fit only to weave and spin!" A shower of missiles emphasized their words. One stone hit Montezuma on the head; two others also struck him. He fell unconscious on the ground and the Spaniards carried him below. The Mexicans, horrified at their own act, cried dismally and dispersed. For the first time since the siege the streets were empty.

When Montezuma came to himself, nothing could console him. He knew himself the despised of his people, and he no longer wished to live. His wounds were not serious, and the Spaniards did their best to take care of him; but he tore away all his bandages, refused food and drink, and a few days later died of a broken heart! To the last he refused the religion of the Christians. "I have but a few moments to live," he said, when Father Olmedo sought to convert him on his death-bed, "and I will not at this hour desert the faith of my fathers!" But he died, apparently, without bitterness towards the Spaniards, commending to Cortes

the care of his two daughters, and asking that they should have a part of his inheritance.

"Your lord will do this," he said, "if it were only for the friendly offices I have rendered the Spaniards, and for the love I have shown them,—though it has brought me to this condition! But for this I bear them no ill-will."

"The tidings of his death were received with real grief by every cavalier and soldier in the army who had access to his person," says Bernal Diaz, "for we all loved him as a father,—and no wonder, seeing how good he was to us."

Poor Montezuma, victim of his own superstitious weakness and of a strange and dark destiny! With him perished the pride and glory of the Mexican kings. He had lived "to see his empire melt away like the winter's wreath; to see a strange race drop, as it were, from the clouds on his land"; and death was the greatest boon that had happened to him since first the iron hoofs of the Spanish horses rang in the streets of his capital. It is said that the Spaniards gave his body to the Aztecs, who buried it with all respect at Chapultepec; but another tradition has it that his corpse was dashed to pieces by his enraged people.

The disgrace and death of Montezuma destroyed the last hope of the Spanish that the Mexicans might relent. From now on, all depended upon their own desperate valor. It became necessary that they should stop some-

how the shower of missiles and fire-brands which rained upon them from the roof of the great temple which stood directly opposite their quarters. Here were intrenched a body of five or six hundred Mexican warriors, many of them nobles of the highest rank. After several unsuccessful attempts which had taken place without him, Cortes himself led a storming party. Step by step they fought their way through the Mexican crowds, across the temple courtyard slippery with blood, and began the ascent of the many steps. The warriors upon the roof hurled great stones and masses of burning wood upon them. Many Spaniards fell, but the rest pressed on and reached the top. There, on the platform sacred to the war-god, the white-faced warriors from the East and the coppery-skinned ones of the West engaged in terrible combat. There was no railing to this dizzy platform, and hundreds, in the heat of fighting, sometimes opposing warriors locked in each other's arms, fell from its sides and were dashed to pieces on the stones of the courtyard below. Cortes himself, it is said, nearly perished in this way. Two Indians seized hold of him and dragged him to the edge, but he tore himself away from their grasp and sent one of them flying in his stead over the edge.

The battle lasted for three hours, but at the end of that time not one of the Aztec warriors was left alive to tell the story of their gallant struggle! The Spaniards had paid for their victory dearly, for forty-five

of their best men had perished. Still, they had the satisfaction of tearing the hideous statue of the war-god, surrounded by smoking human hearts, out of its sanctuary, and hurling it down the steps to destruction; and they set fire to the cursed temple, with its atmosphere of blood and woe.

That night they made another sortie and burned three hundred houses. Cortes hoped now that the Aztecs would listen to proposals of peace, but they were unshakable. They did not care, they told him through Marina, if a thousand Mexicans were killed, as long as they had the blood of a single white man in revenge.

"Our numbers are scarcely diminished by our losses. Yours, on the contrary, are lessening every hour. You are perishing from hunger and sickness. Your provisions and water are failing. You must soon fall into our hands. *The bridges are broken down, and you cannot escape!*"

The words fell like the clap of doom on the Spaniards' ears. There was dismay in the camp. The former followers of Narvaez cursed the day that they had ever joined Cortes; but his own veterans kept steady heads and looked to him to lead them out of their danger. They and he decided that their only hope lay in cutting their way out of the city. On the night of the thirtieth of June, 1520, a little before midnight, everything was ready for the attempt. A portable

bridge had been made, by which they hoped to cross the three ditches of the Tlacopan causeway. The gold and treasure of the palace was divided among the men, but Cortes cautioned them not to take enough to burden them in their flight. Marina was put in charge of the faithful Tlascallan allies.

It was a dark, drizzling night. Stealthily the Spaniards crept out of their courtyard and into the city. The streets were quiet and deserted, the populace was apparently asleep. They had almost reached the causeway, when suddenly a woman's shriek rang out upon the still air. In a moment the alarm was taken up. The serpent-skin drum watched over by some lonely priest at the otherwise deserted temple boomed in hideous warning, and Mexican warriors from all sides, springing to arms, instantly responded with shrill cries.

Cutting the causeway the Spaniards proposed to cross were three wide ditches. To surmount these the portable bridge had been prepared. Sandoval with a number of foot-soldiers was in the van. The bridge was put in place across the first ditch. The Spaniards began to cross. But before many had passed over Indian arrows whizzed in showers about their heads and the Aztecs, springing from multitudes of canoes which had appeared as if by magic upon the waters, climbed upon the causeway and pulled the Spaniards down. The front ranks of the Spaniards cut through the enemy

and passed on, while the rest followed in a slow procession across the narrow bridge; but soon the foremost came to the second canal, which they could not pass, and meanwhile they were set upon furiously by the Indians. They sent to the rear for the portable bridge; but, alas, that had been so wedged into the ground by the heavy weight of the men and the artillery crossing over it that it could not be moved. The Spaniards were trapped! An impassable canal in front of them, the enemy on their sides and rear. All order was lost. The causeway became the scene of a nightmarish struggle, those in front plunging desperately into the dark waters of the canal, those behind pressing upon their slowly-moving comrades and trampling them under foot until the way was still further choked with heaps of bodies. All about, hosts of yelling, triumphant Aztecs, flinging stones and arrows incessantly, attacking with war-clubs, and, whenever possible, dragging the Christians down into the water and taking them away in canoes for the horrible sacrifice. Hideous was the clamor which arose upon the still night air, the groans and shrieks of the Spaniards, the wild war-cries of the Indians, the neighing of the terrified horses, and over all, the portentous booming of the great war-drum of the temple.

Finally, the second ditch became choked up by the wreck of ammunition wagons, guns, baggage, and dead bodies of men, and over this horrible mixture the rest

of the army crossed. But there was still the third opening, a wide and deep one, to traverse. Desperately the cavaliers plunged in, on horseback, and the infantry followed as best they could, swimming or clinging to the horses' tails. Many perished here because they were overweighted with the gold they had greedily gathered up, heedless of Cortes' warning. A number of them gained the shore, among them Cortes, who had been doing his best to encourage the others and bring order out of the confusion. But no sooner did he reach the further shore than he heard that the rearguard was in great danger, and he with Sandoval and other gallant officers hurried back to help them, swimming the ditches and working their way through the frantic crowd as best they might. Dawn found Alvarado, unhorsed, with a few of his followers surrounded by countless numbers of Indians, on the other side of the ditch. His plight seemed hopeless, since to plunge into the waters thronged with enemy canoes was certain death; but suddenly the "Sun," with the courage of despair, thrust his long lance into the ground and vaulted over the tremendous chasm safely.

Indians and Christians alike gasped.

"This is truly *Tonatiuh,* the child of the Sun," exclaimed the Aztecs.

To this day the place of Alvarado's Leap, now a part of a solid street, is pointed out to strangers by the inhabitants of Mexico.

The survivors, including Cortes, straggled along the road to the little village of Popotla. There Cortes rested on the steps of a temple and, as he surveyed the forlorn remnant of his troops, gave way and wept bitterly. In that "Noche Triste," the "Sad Night," as it is still called, the Spaniards had lost probably about four hundred and fifty of their men, twenty-six horses and about four thousand of the Indian allies. The tree under which Cortes wept still grows out in the suburb of Popotla.

CHAPTER XI

THE AZTEC GODS DEPART FOREVER

As the dawn came, the broken but not broken-spirited little army, Cortes at the head, pressed forward to Otoncalpolco. They drove out the natives who were guarding the temple there, and entered its shelter to rest and dress their wounds. The chivalrous Sandoval, the reckless Alvarado, and faithful Marina, had somehow miraculously survived the misfortunes of the day. Montezuma's two sons had been killed.

For several days and nights Cortes with his little army advanced along a strange road north of the capital, harassed by hostile natives, who set upon them from the defiles with stones, arrows and lances. One morning they came suddenly upon an open plain, where a vast army lay in wait for them. It was the valley of Otumba, and the army had been sent by Cuitlahua, Montezuma's brother, now in charge of the City of Mexico, who had been kept informed of Cortes' movements. Their numbers were so many that it seemed hopeless for the Spaniards to attack them, especially in their wounded and exhausted condition, but the little

band hesitated only a few minutes, and at the word of command from Cortes dashed forward, the cavalry in the lead, to cut a way through the midst of the vast crowd. Never apparently was there a more hopeless undertaking; for hours the Spaniards fought as desperately as if against waves of the sea, for no matter how many natives were struck down, countless more pressed forward. The leaders, Cortes, Oli, Alvarado, and Sandoval, were everywhere, keeping up the hearts of their men. "It was above all glorious to hear the brave and spirited Sandoval cry out, 'On, my fellow-soldiers, this day the victory must be ours! Our trust is in God! We shall not lose our lives here, for God has destined us for better things!'" Bernal Diaz tells us.

At last the chief of the army was seen, clothed in armor shining with gold, with white head plumes, bearing the banner of Tenochtitlan, and guarded by the most aristocratic and richly dressed of the young warriors. With one of his sudden inspirations, Cortes saw in him their one chance of success. Lance in hand, he urged forward his charger and making a rush, struck him off his litter, and caused him to drop his banner, while the other Spanish officers took care of the attendants. One of the Spaniards seized the banner and handed it to Cortes. From that moment the battle was won, since the Mexicans, seeing their chief overthrown as by a miracle, and their banner in the

hands of Cortes, thought the enemy indeed invincible, and fled. This battle of Otumba, which took place on the eighth of July, 1820, is one of the most remarkable in all history.

Much encouraged, the Spaniards pressed on to Tlascalla, not far away, and found the Tlascallans still faithful friends. General Xicotencatl, indeed, wished to destroy the Spaniards, but the old blind chief, his father, blind in more ways than one, opposed him bitterly for this desire and sent him out of the council. The Spaniards rested in Tlascalla and recovered from their wounds, and presently there came to Cortes ambassadors from Ixtlilxochitl, the King of Texcuco, offering to raise for him a large army if he would return and invade Mexico. You will remember that the Texcucans had always been jealous of the Mexicans. Cortes accepted the offer, in spite of the protests of Narvaez' men, who had had enough of Mexican campaigns and wished to go back to Cuba. They and some of the other soldiers presented a protest in form to the general, who replied,

"What is this I hear? Is it true that you would retire from the fertile fields of New Spain—you, Spaniards, Castilians, Christians? leave the shiploads of gold which in the Aztec capital we saw and handled? leave standing the abominable idols with their blood-stained ministers, and tamely summon others to enjoy the riches and glory which you are too craven to

grasp? Alas for your patriotism, your duty to your emperor and your God! Alas for the honor of the Spanish arms! Go all who will; abandon your sacred trusts, and with them the wealth in mines and tributes, and the fair estates awaiting you. For myself, if left alone, then alone will I remain, and take command of Indians, since my Spanish followers have all turned cowards!" Fired by this speech, Cortes' old comrades declared they would not permit a man to leave for the coast.

The army was mustered out at a village near Tlascalla; it included 450 Spaniards, with about 20 horses, a few firelocks and field pieces, cross-bows, swords and pikes. There were about 6000 Tlascallans, and still more Indians sent from Texcuco. Reinforcements later brought the number of Spaniards up to 900, and increased the horsemen and artillery. An important feature of the preparations was brigantines built in Tlascalla, and carried in pieces on the shoulders of Indians to Lake Texcuco. The Spanish advanced to Texcuco, entering there on December 31, 1520.

Cortes managed in a few months by negotiations and force of arms to bring the lake provinces and towns in the valley of Mexico under his control. This was the easier since many of them had for a long time hated the Aztecs on account of their arrogance and cruelty.

The siege of Mexico began during the last of May, 1521, when the brigantines, having been carried all the

way from Tlascalla, were launched in the lake. A long description of this siege would be too painful to read, so we will pass over it as quickly as possible. It lasted for eighty days. Again and again the Spaniards penetrated to the heart of the city, only to be driven back again to their encampments. The Mexicans were desperate, and fought like rats in a trap. The narrow streets, and the isolation of the houses by moats and drawbridges helped the defense, in preventing the spread of fire and making it easy for the natives to attack the Spanish troops from the houses and roofs. Finally the Spanish and the allies, by Cortes' orders, tore down every building as they captured it, and filled up every channel as they advanced. In this way they slowly turned the beautiful city into a place of desolation.

"Raze and tear down," the Aztecs called to the allies when they saw them at this work, "raze and tear down, ye slaves, but all must be rebuilt with your own hands for the victor!"

Meanwhile the brigantines sailed about the lake, helping the soldiers with their cannonading and sinking countless Aztec canoes.

At first the Mexicans had plenty of provisions, but as the siege wore on, these failed and the people became gaunt and weak from hunger. They no longer cared whether they lived or died; the warriors fought more desperately, the women and children and old men

were cut down like slaughtered sheep. They were living on snails, lizards and rats, the scum of the waters, roots, and weeds. One by one, their streets and houses were falling into the possession of the enemy. The palace of Axayacatl, the former Spanish headquarters, was razed to the ground, the beautiful House of the Birds had fallen. The market had been taken by Alvarado and his men, and again the Spaniards had hurled the idols from the temple overlooking it. The besieged were now huddled into one quarter, the dead, the dying, and those almost dying from hunger, wounds and fatigue, crowded all together.

The leader of the defense in the City of Mexico was Guatemozin, a brave young prince, hardly twenty years old, who had succeeded Cuitlahua, Montezuma's brother, who had died of the small-pox, which, introduced by Narvaez' men, was then raging through the unfortunate country. Guatemozin had married one of Montezuma's daughters. He was not only courageous, but intelligent, and put up the best defense possible under the circumstances. Many times during the siege Cortes sent messages to him, begging him to make a surrender on honorable terms and save his people further suffering. Guatemozin would have none of him.

"Tell Malinche that I and mine elect to die. We will entrust ourselves neither to the men who commit nor the god who permits such atrocities!" was his answer.

The Spaniards suffered much from wounds, exhaustion and hunger during the siege, but the thing they most dreaded was the hollow, mournful boom of the serpent skin drum on the summit of the temple, and the "hellish music," as Bernal Diaz calls it, of the shell trumpets, horns and other barbaric instruments which announced the hours of sacrifice. From the Spanish camps could plainly be seen all the horrible proceedings: the white, naked bodies of the Spanish captives as, with feathers in their hair, they were forced to dance on the platform of the temple, and then the sacrifice, one by one, on the curved stone, and the dead bodies rolled down the steps of the temple. The remembrance of these things made the invaders fight all the more fiercely, in order at all events not to be taken alive.

At last the Mexicans made a desperate attack from all quarters at once upon the besiegers, but though at first the Spanish were thrown into confusion, they rallied and recovered, killing or capturing an enormous number of Aztecs.

As things became more and more hopeless, many of the starving Mexicans and their chiefs wished for peace at any price. Guatemozin and the higher chiefs still held out. One morning Sandoval, who had been ordered by Cortes to watch the lake, spied a very handsomely ornamented canoe crossing at the further end and ordered one of his captains to give chase. As it

did not stop when signaled, the Spaniards were about to fire on it, when one of the passengers stood up and said,

"Forbid your men to shoot at me! I am the King of Mexico. I only beg of you not to touch my wife, my children, these women, or anything else I have with me here, but take me alone to Malinche."

The royal captive was escorted with all honors to Cortes. He was a dignified, grave, young man, with features worn with suffering and large, brilliant eyes. Walking with a firm step into the presence of his enemy, he said,

"Malinche, I have done all within my power for the defense of my people; but the gods have not favored me. My empire is gone, my city is destroyed, and my vassals are dead. For what have I to live? Now draw the dagger which hangs at your belt, and plunge it into my bosom." He touched a dagger at Cortes' belt.

"Fear not," replied Cortes. "You shall be treated with all honor. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior. A Spaniard knows how to respect valor even in an enemy." He gave orders that Guatemozin and his family should be given the food they sorely needed and shown every mark of distinction.

With the surrender of its valiant chief the siege of the City of Mexico came to an end. On that night a terrific storm of thunder and lightning raged over the

desolated city, shaking the ruined houses, flooding the pestilential streets and illuminating the whole scene of desolation with a series of ghastly flashes. The ancient gods were taking their departure in fury, leaving the city forever to the tender mercies of the white strangers!

Never, in any story, has there been a more extraordinary exploit than this conquest of Mexico. That a band of white men, so few in number, should even dare to make their way through so many miles of rough and unknown country, swarming with strange tribes, to visit, against his express command, a monarch securely protected in his own city in the midst of a vast number of devoted subjects—that in itself is strange enough; that these white men should actually capture the monarch in his own palace and take him prisoner to their quarters makes the exploits of the heroes of dime-novels pale and uninteresting; but that, after the whole population of the city had risen against them as one man, they should escape, and once again, after tremendous losses, return, put the city to the siege and capture it, is almost unbelievable. And yet we must remember that the success of the Spaniards was not alone due to their audacity and strength of arms, great as these were. The Mexicans were conquered by natives of their own country as much as by the white man. It was Mexican haughtiness and Mexican cruelty which laid the train of gunpowder to which the

Spaniards applied the match. If the coast natives had not been well disposed towards the Spaniards; if Tlascalla, so long harassed by the cruel Aztec armies, had not formed a safe base and retreating point for the foreigners, and given them her warriors in great numbers; if the Indians of the Valley of Mexico had not been divided among themselves on account of the exactions of the dominant tribe, Mexico would never have fallen.

In a thousand acts of injustice and cruelty to conquered tribes, in a million sacrifices of war-captives, Mexico had written her own doom.

CHAPTER XII

AFTER THE CONQUEST

The Mexicans obtained permission from Cortes to leave the wreck of their once-beautiful city, and a ghastly procession of starving women and children and wounded men straggled along the causeways to the green fields beyond. The Spaniards at once set about their task of cleaning the city. Huge bonfires were lighted in the streets, and heaps of corpses buried.

During all the seventy-five days of siege the Spaniards had only lost about one hundred men. The allies lost great numbers, and it is believed that about a hundred thousand Mexicans fell by the sword, and many more from famine and disease.

The Spanish soldiers roamed about the street of Tenochtitlan looking for the treasure which was supposed to be hid there in such vast quantities. But very little was found. Even the gold and rich stuffs they had carried themselves from the palace of Axayacatl and lost in the struggle on the causeway on the "Sad Night" were mostly lacking. The disappointment of the soldiers was great. Of what use had all their strug-

gles and sufferings been if they were not to be made rich by them? They looked angrily at the captive King, Guatemozin. He surely must know where the treasure was hid. Perhaps he had some secret understanding with Cortes to share it with him and say nothing about it. These suspicions, hinted to Cortes, cut him to the quick; and when the furious soldiers demanded the torture of Guatemozin to force him to confess the whereabouts of his riches, Cortes, to his everlasting shame, consented. Guatemozin and the chief of Tacuba were tortured together, by having their feet immersed in boiling oil. Guatemozin endured his suffering with the greatest stoicism.

"Think you I am enjoying my bath?" he inquired ironically, when the other chief groaned.

The Spaniards got no satisfaction from either of them. Guatemozin said that the treasure had been buried underneath the waters of the lake, while the king of Tacuba confessed that a part of it was buried in the grounds of one of his villas. But it was not found there, and divers in the lake never recovered anything of much value. To this day, people in Mexico believe that the gold the Spaniards fought for so fiercely lies hidden in the soft mud at the bottom of Lake Texcuco.

Cortes decided to make his capital on the site of the old city, and the work of rebuilding went quickly forward. Conquered Mexicans and the allies who had

helped conquer them were alike forced to labor. The Aztec prophecy with which they taunted the allies during the siege had come true.

Now came messengers from all Mexico to pay their respects to this wonderful conqueror. One of these was the King of Michoacan, that great western province which had never been conquered by the Aztecs, who gazed in awe at the Spanish war-chief who had tamed the thunder and lightning and razed the temples and houses of proud Tenochtitlan. He allowed the Spaniards to explore his territory, and they gained their first glimpse of the great Southern ocean, and brought back specimens of gold and California pearls. Cortes instantly determined to plant colonies on the Gulf of California, not far from which, he hoped, were the isles of the Indies, teeming with gold and pearls and spices. He also sent expeditions, under Sandoval and Alvarado, to explore some of the provinces to the south of the Cordilleras, which were still hostile, and bring them under Spanish control.

After some delay, due to the intrigues of Velasquez, who was madly jealous of Cortes and everything he had done, Cortes was made Governor, Captain-General, and Chief Justice of New Spain, as Mexico was now called. His officers were also rewarded with honors and lands, and the soldiers promised grants of land. Velasquez was so disgusted with this success of his rival that he fell into melancholy and shortly after died, it is said,

of a broken heart. Dona Catalina Xuarez, Cortes' wife, came to Mexico to share the success of her husband. Rumor says that he received her coldly, though with all outward honor. The climate of the tableland did not suit the poor lady, and in three months she died. People hinted that Cortes poisoned her. There is not the slightest foundation for this rumor, but he realized that Marina, who loved him so devotedly and had helped him so much during the Conquest, was the innocent cause of the talk and that she must be got out of the way.

About this time he set out with many of his soldiers on an expedition to Honduras, to quell a revolt that had arisen there under his officer Christoval de Olid, who, sent by Cortes to plant a colony, had set up an independent government. On this long trip Marina accompanied her Captain for the last time as interpreter. On the way they passed through her native province, Coatzacualco, and Cortes halted for some days there to hold a conference with the chiefs. To this conference came the "princess," Marina's mother, and her son. Marina, as usual, was at Cortes' side, interpreting. Her likeness to the "princess" and the chief struck every one; Marina's mother instantly recognized her and was filled with terror. But Marina, in the sweetest way, instantly raised her from her knees where she had fallen, and embraced her, giving her the ornaments and jewels she was wearing. She told her rela-

tives that "she felt much happier than before, now that she had been instructed in the Christian faith and given up the bloody worship of the Aztecs."

Farther on in the route, Cortes married Marina with all due ceremony to one of his soldiers, Juan Xaramillo. What she felt we do not know. It is said that she never lived with her soldier husband, but went back to her native province, where she passed the rest of her days. She died a long while before the Conqueror. It is said by the Indians that her spirit still watches over the Capital that she helped to win, and that her ghost, in all the robes of an Indian princess, is seen sometimes at night flitting through the groves of the hill of Chapultepec.

Cortes took Guatemozin and the chief of Tacuba with him on this same trip to Honduras, since they were too important and dangerous personages to be left behind. On the way, an Indian told him that a conspiracy to massacre the Spaniards in a narrow defile was being hatched, and that Guatemozin and the other chief were at the head of it. In vain did the unfortunate lords declare their innocence. Cortes had found them a burden for a long time, and now he took this pretext to put them both out of the way. They were hanged from the branches of a great cypress-tree on the trail. Guatemozin's splendid courage never faltered.

"I knew what it was to trust to your false prom-

ises, Malinche," he said, just before he died. "I knew that you had destined me to this fate, since I did not fall by my own hand when you entered my city of Tenochtitlan. Why do you slay me so unjustly? God will demand it of you!"

It is said that Cortes brooded over this deed; that he could not sleep at night, and became moody and irritable and unlike himself.

The hardships of this trip to Honduras were almost unbelievable; they far surpassed those of the expeditions before the Conquest. It was the rainy season and countless swollen streams had to be crossed. Many times they had to stop to make bridges, and once they constructed a bridge of a thousand pieces of timber, each as thick as a man and sixty feet long, all cut by themselves from the forest. Then there were great forests to be penetrated and mountain ranges traversed, and at the last even their guides deserted them. They passed through the beautiful capital of Aculan, whose name is to be found on no map—Aculan was a province which carried on a thriving commerce with the farthest parts of Central America—and went on to the Lake of Peten, then occupied by Mayas, who had built their city on an island of the lake. These were supposedly converted to Christianity by the Franciscan friars who accompanied Cortes. One of the Spanish horses, which had been disabled, was left here. The Indians treated the animal with the greatest distinc-

tion and gave him delicious dishes of poultry and other delicacies to eat such as they would have given to a sick person. The poor animal, not relishing such fare, pined away and died, and the Indians, frightened because they had offended him, made an image of him in stone, placed it in one of their temples, and worshiped it as a deity. Some years later, friars who visited the place found the image being worshiped as the god of thunder and lightning!

Reaching Honduras, Cortes found Olid already dead and the country at peace; but about this time rumors reached him of an uprising in the City of Mexico, where his enemies, proclaiming him dead, had taken control of the government and were confiscating his property and that of other of the Conquerors. He attempted to go back by sea, was nearly shipwrecked twice, but finally reached Vera Cruz and made his way to the capital, where he created as much astonishment as if he had been raised from the dead. He soon quelled the anarchy; but from now on his enemies succeeded in making his life miserable.

To stop the reports against him, Cortes went to Spain to see the Emperor. The returned Conqueror made a great sensation in his own country; people flocked from far and wide to get a glimpse of the bronzed and scarred hero, who had won an empire for Castile; and Cortes' unaffected manners and geniality won him friends everywhere. Some Indian chieftans,

including a son of Montezuma, and another of Maxixca of Tlascalla, in their gorgeous feather robes with plumes in their hair, shared the attention paid to Cortes; and there were also in his train a number of Indian jugglers, dancers and jesters who astonished the Europeans and were thought worthy of being sent as a present to the Pope. Now that Cortes had actually appeared, to give the lie to all the slanders about him, and was creating so great a sensation in the countryside, the emperor decided to receive him graciously, and showed him great favor. Moreover, he made him Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca, a very rich tract of land in Mexico. But he would not give Cortes the civil government of the country he had conquered, for it was against the policy of the Spanish crown to give conquerors such power. A Viceroy was appointed to govern the colony; but Cortes was made Captain-General of New Spain and of the coasts of the South Sea and given gracious permission to discover as many more new countries as he could, at his own expense.

While on this visit Cortes married a very young and beautiful noblewoman, Dona Juana de Zuniga. His wedding gift to her was five emeralds, which were among the few Aztec treasures saved on the "Sad Night." They were of great size and brilliancy and wonderfully cut in the shapes of flowers, fishes and other natural objects. Tradition says that the Spanish Queen had coveted these treasures for herself and was

jealous of their being given to the fair young bride, and that from then on she hindered the interests of Cortes at court. Cortes, soon tired of idleness, even under such pleasant circumstances, returned to Mexico the next year, with his wife and mother (his father had died just before he reached Spain) and took up his residence in the beautiful city of Cuernavaca on the southern slope of the Cordilleras, where he had built a stately palace. Here, for a while, he busied himself in agriculture, introducing the sugar-cane, mulberry-trees for the silk-worm industry, sheep and cattle; and he also developed gold and silver mines on his estate. But even this was not occupation enough for him, and he set off to explore the Southern Ocean, hoping to find the fabled islands of the Indies, and also a strait connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific. He endured great hardships and did not make any notable discoveries, while the expenses of the expeditions, which he paid out of his own pocket, and for which he even pawned his wife's jewels, nearly ruined him. He also sent expeditions to the north. They discovered California, but failed to find any gold. He went to Spain again to settle some disputes which had arisen in connection with his explorations, and to get remuneration for the sums he had spent, but, though he was politely received, his affairs dragged and nothing was done to satisfy him. He joined in an expedition against Algiers, the ship he was in was wrecked, he and

his son had to swim to the shore and the five emeralds which he was carrying, the most valuable of all the treasures of Montezuma, were lost. On this campaign the veteran Conqueror was treated with little consideration. The siege was unsuccessful, and it was decided to abandon it. Cortes was most unwilling.

"Had I but a handful of my veterans from New Spain here, they would not long stay outside of yonder fortress!"

"Indeed, senor, no doubt you would accomplish wonders; but you would find the Moors quite a different foe from your naked savages!" sneered the other officers.

Cortes' further attempts for recognition at court were received but coldly. He was getting old, and no matter how great his deeds had been, they were all over, nothing more could be expected of him. What was the use of showing him further favors, reasoned the King. Besides, lately, his enterprises had been unsuccessful, and he was really becoming a decided nuisance. And already Pizarro had discovered Peru, which was yielding ten times more gold than Mexico had yielded silver. So when Cortes addressed his last petition to the King, reminding him of all the toils and dangers he had undergone in the service of Spain, and the nations he had won, and that he was now old, infirm and harassed by debt, and longed for a settlement of his affairs, that "he might stay at home and

settle his account with Heaven," the pathetic appeal had little or no effect. Three more years were passed in waiting, and then Cortes resolved to return to Mexico. He had only reached Seville, accompanied by his son, when he fell sick, and troubled in mind as he was, found no strength to rally. He died at a village near Seville on the second of December, 1547. His remains were buried first in the monastery of San Isidro, in the family vault of the Dukes of Medina Sidonia, and afterwards taken to Mexico, to the monastery of St. Francis, in Texcuco. Some years later they were removed again with great ceremony to the City of Mexico, and placed in the church of St. Francis, but again in 1794 they were taken out and put in the Hospital of Jesus of Nazareth, which Cortes had founded. But in 1823, when Mexico declared her independence of Old Spain, a mob threatened to break into this tomb and scatter the ashes of the Conqueror to the four winds, and to prevent this desecration some friends of the family entered the vault at night and removed the relics, which were sent to Italy and found a final resting-place in the tomb of the Monteleones, who are descendants of Cortes.

And so is finished the story of the great Conqueror, the man of iron will and boundless courage, who never gave up one of his enterprises, though it was wilder than the wildest day-dream; who welded together into a united and ardent band a crowd of unruly

desperadoes and avaricious merchants; the man who bent millions of strange natives to his purpose, who kidnapped an Emperor, and carved out of the unknown map of America with his sword "as many kingdoms as there were towns in Spain" for his Emperor; the man who, when this great Conquest was done, was not content with resting on his well-won estates, but must set off on new expeditions which surpassed in hardships all that he had undergone. And he was not only a conqueror; after the fall of Mexico he rebuilt the city in a very stable and splendid manner, developed the resources of the country, introduced the culture of the sugar-cane, orange and grape, and would certainly have governed it well if he had been left to do so.

There are several deeds which blot the memory of Cortes. He was pitiless when the necessities of conquest demanded it; but he never permitted the natives to be outraged or ill-treated after they were conquered, and on the whole he was not cruel. That the natives liked him was seen by the way they flocked to greet him when he returned to Mexico from Honduras after he had been reported dead. He was in advance of his age in having grave doubts as to the right of any one to hold slaves, and in his will he enjoined it on his son and his heirs to "spare no pains to come to an exact knowledge of the truth [on this point], as a mat-

ter which deeply concerns the conscience of each of them, no less than mine."

It must never be forgotten of Cortes that he was deeply religious, as were the rest of his gallant companions, that he thought he was doing Christ's work in rescuing the heathen from their sins, and that he would willingly have died at any time in defense of his faith. Take him for all and all, he was a man; and withal, one of the most dazzling figures in all history.

CHAPTER XIII

MEXICO UNDER THE VICEROYS

Following Cortes, came a long succession of Viceroys, or Royal Governors, who, helped or hindered by the Audencias, the administrative councils also appointed by the King, ruled Mexico for three hundred years. These were years when zealous priests converted, superficially at least, a whole nation to Christianity—when great cathedrals and churches rose above the huts of humble Indians—when Spanish grandees lorded it over feudal estates as large, almost, as Spanish provinces—when the terrible Inquisition spread its black shadow over the smiling plains of Anahuac—when galleons loaded with gold and silver from the mines of Mexico sailed to enrich the treasuries of the Spanish kings—when pirates flocked in the Spanish Main and sacked the coast cities—when lakes flooded the rebuilt City of Mexico and made it once again, as in old times, an inland Venice. Three hundred years of Spanish ambition, magnificence, cruelty and indolence planted on the ruins of the Aztec civilization and basking in the brilliant sunshine of the New

World; there we have the history of Mexico under the Viceroys.

They have a charm of their own, these sleepy Spanish centuries, and we shall linger over them a little, to hear some of the stories of Saints and Angels who seem to have had the country under their special protection (though they let some very curious things go by without protest), and to trace the beginnings of the beautiful cities which now display their Spanish-American architecture in the valleys and plains of Mexico. As to the sixty-two Viceroys who "strutted their uneasy hour" upon the Mexican stage, we shall account for but few of them; for their Spanish names are long and confusing, their deeds are comparatively unimportant, and time is precious.

Yet we must mention the first Viceroy, Mendoza, appointed in 1535, who during his fifteen years of government accomplished much for the country. The Indians were kindly treated during his term, the priests winning them over to Christianity by wise and gentle measures. The good Bishop Las Casas, whom we heard of in Cuba and who fairly earned his title of Protector-General of the Indians, came to Mexico at this time and labored hard, but without much success, to mitigate the cruelty of the Spanish landowners. Mendoza also introduced a fine breed of sheep from Spain, fostered the silk industry, advanced the commerce, mining and manufactures of the colony, and

founded the cities of Guadalajara and Valladolid (now Morelia). During his administration the first book ever printed in the New World was produced in the City of Mexico in 1536 on a printing-press brought by him from Spain. This far antedates the Massachusetts Bay Psalter, thoughtlessly claimed by some historians as the first book of North America. During the same year silver and copper coins were minted in the capital.

Indeed, Mexico in the sixteenth century, many years before the Pilgrims landed on our stern and rock-bound coast, was far up among the nations of the world in culture and civilization. In 1553 the Royal University in the capital opened its doors to a waiting throng of students. It was modeled after the University of Salamanca in Spain, the finest of the times. Scientists, artists and literary men brought their works to the capital for approval, a fact which indicates the presence there of a large number of intelligent people. There was even an industrial school, which we think of as a distinctly modern innovation. It educated a thousand Indian boys in useful arts and crafts.

The second Viceroy, Don Luis de Velasco, was also an excellent man. He was called the "Emancipator" because his first official act was the emancipation of one hundred and fifty thousand Indian slaves working in the mines. "Of more importance than all the mines in the world is the liberty of the Indians," he said,

when remonstrated with by the mine-owners for this humane deed. Unfortunately, few of the Spaniards in power after him had the same sentiments.

Velasco governed for fourteen years. In the interval between his death and the arrival of his successor, a strange affair took place. Don Martin Cortes, the Marques del Valle, Cortes' legitimate son, was accused of being at the head of a plot to kill all the Spaniards and make himself King of Mexico. He was supposed to be aided in this by Don Martin, his half brother, the son of Cortes and Marina. The incident which gave a color to this suspicion shows so well the life of the times that it is worth quoting, in the interesting account of the historian, Branz Mayer.

"The Marques del Valle, heir of Hernando Cortes, had been for some time established in the capital, where he formed the nucleus of a noble circle, and was admired by all classes for the splendor with which he maintained the honor of his house. . . .

"On the thirtieth of June, 1566, the Dean of the Cathedral . . . baptized in that sacred edifice the twin daughters of the Marques del Valle. . . . The festivities of the gallant Marques upon this occasion of family rejoicing were, as usual, among the rich in Spanish countries attended with the utmost magnificence.

"It was a day of general rejoicing and festivity in the city of Mexico. From the palace of the Marques to the door of the Cathedral a passage was formed

under lofty and splendid canopies composed of the richest stuffs. A salute of artillery announced the entry of the twins into the church, and it was repeated at their departure. At the moment when the rites of religion were completed and the infants were borne back to their home through the covered way, the spectators in the plaza were amused by a complete chivalric tournament between twelve knights in complete steel. Other rare and costly diversions succeeded in an artificial grove, which the Marques had caused to be erected in the *plazuela* or lesser square, intervening between his palace and the cathedral. Nor were these amusements designed alone for persons of his own rank, for the masses of the people were also summoned to partake of his bountiful hospitality. At the doors of his princely dwelling, tables were sumptuously spread with roasted oxen, all kinds of wild fowl and numberless delicacies, whilst two casks of red and white wine,—then esteemed in Mexico the most luxurious rarities,—were set flowing for the people.

"At night Alonso Gonzalez de Avila, the intimate companion of the Marques, entertained the chief personages of Mexico with a splendid ball, during which there was a performance or symbolical masque representing the reception of Hernando Cortes by the Emperor Montezuma. Alonso, splendidly attired, sustained the part of the Mexican sovereign. During one of the evolutions of the spectacle, Avila threw around

the neck of the young Marques a collar of intermingled flowers and jewels, similar to the one with which his father had been adorned by Montezuma; and, at the conclusion of the scene, he placed on the heads of the Marques and his wife a coronet of laurel, with the exclamation, 'How well these crowns befit your noble brows!' "

This was enough for the jealous members of the King's Audencia. They instantly suspected the Marques of planning to seize the crown of Mexico, and presently managed to find what they considered proofs of his treason. He was thrown in prison, as were also Don Martin, Alonso Avila and other friends. Two of the latter were executed as an example, and Don Martin was put to the torture, but the Marques del Valle was let off by banishment to Spain. There was more danger than advantage at that time in being descended from the Conqueror of Mexico!

During the rule of the next Viceroy, in the year 1571, there descended upon unfortunate Mexico the Office of the Holy Inquisition, the same power that had decreed the burning alive of countless heretics in the mother country. Fortunately, the Indians were exempt from its cruel edicts; but in the two centuries and a half that it existed in Mexico—that is, till 1815—it caused the death of a number of Protestants at the *quemadero* (burning place) at the western end of the city. Usually the victims were strangled to death

before being burnt. The Dominicans were responsible for this hated institution, which did much to bring about the downfall of the Spanish rule in Mexico.

In 1572, the Jesuits arrived in New Spain, and the next year the building of the Cathedral of the City of Mexico was begun, upon a site just behind where the old Aztec temple had stood. This Cathedral, one of the show places of Mexico, was not finished till 1730. The Jesuits were expelled from Mexico by order of the Spanish King in 1767. They had made themselves beloved by the people, who greatly regretted their going.

Aside from the Inquisition, the influence of the Church in Mexico was beneficial during the first century of Spanish rule, and the missionaries labored unselfishly and with great zeal to convert the natives from their old bloody religion to the gentle Christian faith. In many cases, while changing the main doctrines, they allowed the Indians to keep the minor ceremonies of their former paganism, and to this day in Mexico there are strange rites mingled with the church services and handed down from the dim ages of the past, and idols in the churches which the priests do not dare to remove. The courage of the missionaries during this first century knew no bounds; they were eager to explore the farthest limits of the country to gain new tribes for the Faith. The Jesuits and the Franciscans were the chief actors in the romantic stories of

the settlement of New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and California, and it was under their direction that the willing Indians built the picturesque old mission churches and cloisters which delight tourists through our southwest to-day.

Floating about from mouth to mouth at this period was the Indian legend of the wondrous Seven Cities of Cibola, many miles to the north, where whole streets were peopled by goldsmiths. It tantalized more than one gold-hungry Viceroy of New Spain, and several expeditions were sent out from the City of Mexico to find them. A priest, the Friar Marcos, was one of the first to go, accompanied only by a negro and a few Indians. When he reached the entrance to the valley of the Sonora River, he sent the negro on ahead with instructions to send him a cross a palm in length if he discovered anything, and a cross two palms in length if he found a "great thing," and a large cross if he heard of a country "greater and better than New Spain." In four days back came a messenger with a cross as high as a man, and a wonderful tale of a country thirty days to the north where there were seven cities made of houses two, three or even four stories in height, whose doorways were covered with turquoises!

The good priest hastened on, crossing with infinite toil the burning sands of the Arizona desert, accompani d only by a few Indians. But when at last he

reached Cibola, he saw only the mud walls of a Zuñi village, which boasted neither gold nor silver, indeed nothing remarkable but a few turquoises in the necklaces of the squaws. Much disappointed, he returned to the City of Mexico. The fascinating legend, however, was hard to kill, and shortly afterwards the gallant adventurer Coronado, with an imposing army of Spanish cavaliers, foot-soldiers and Indian allies, set out to find the fabled region. But they also discovered no cities of gold or silver, only the terraced communal houses of half-naked, hostile Zuñis; and after numerous unpleasant experiences the battered survivors at last straggled back to Mexico. The rich mining region of Durango in northern Mexico was explored about that time by priests and mine-hunters, and early in the seventeenth century Juan de Onate, a mine-owner with a passion for exploration, crossed the Rio Grande at El Paso and in 1609 founded the colony of Santa Fé, destined to become the oldest city in the United States. The Franciscan missionaries kept creeping up through the Chihuahua desert, the Jesuits through the Sonora mining region, until they reached the isolated colonies of El Paso and Santa Fé, and in 1680 in that region there were fifty well-built churches. Many of their graceful arches still raise themselves above the sands of the deserts, and in one instance at least, that of the mission of San Xavier del Bac near Tucson, Arizona, the bells in the tower

at a recent date called the faithful Indians to mass as they did three centuries ago.

While the friars were thus spreading religion in the north, truly wonderful events from a religious point of view, if one may believe the legends, were taking place in southern Mexico. One of these was the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, a story which has such a firm hold upon the entire Mexican people and figures so largely in their history and modern life that we must stop to tell it. The scene of it is the village of Guadalupe, a short distance outside of the City of Mexico, which has been the point of pilgrimage or Mecca of the Mexicans for nearly four centuries.

Away back in the time of the first Viceroy, in the year 1531, a poor Indian named Juan Diego was approaching one day the Hill of Tepeyacac, but a few years before an Aztec place of worship dedicated to the Mother-god. All at once he heard a sound of such sweet music that it seemed to him it could only be made by angels. Raising his eyes to the rocks above him, he saw a lovely vision, a lady with a halo of light about her head, who told him to inform his Bishop she wished a great temple to be built on the hill in her honor. While the Indian knelt in awe, the Lady disappeared.

Juan Diego hastened to tell the Bishop what had happened, but the latter would not believe the story

without some proof. Three times the Indian went back to the hill and saw the Lady, who repeated her request, but would not give him any sign to show the Bishop. Then Juan's uncle was taken very ill with a fever, and the Indian, after nursing him for two days, on the third day hurried off to find a confessor. He was afraid to pass the spot where he had seen the Virgin, so took a path on the other side of the mountain. But lo and behold, the Lady appeared to him there also. He told her of his uncle's illness, and she assured him that he was "quite well again." Then she commanded Juan to cut her some flowers from the barren hillside. As Juan looked at the bare rocks hopelessly, he suddenly saw roses springing where no flowers had ever grown before. He picked some; the Lady told him to take them to the Bishop as her sign. Juan wrapped the blossoms in his *tilma,* as the Mexican blanket is called, and hastened to the Bishop's palace. When he reached there and unwrapped his blanket in the presence of the Bishop, instead of the flowers they beheld a lovely picture of the Virgin, imprinted on the blanket in soft, bright colors. And if one doubted this story, one had only to go and look in the Church at Guadalupe—for there at a recent date was the very picture, carefully guarded!

From this time on the Virgin of Guadalupe has been the beloved patron saint of the Indian population of Mexico. She is supposed to watch over them and fight

their battles for them; indeed, one of the first acts of Hidalgo, the leader of the peons in the Revolution, was to take her picture from a village church, and carry it as a banner throughout the campaign. December 12, the day when the Indian gathered the roses, is kept in the republic as a national holiday. Every year at this season, before the recent Revolutionary disturbances, the Indians poured into Guadalupe, from all parts of the country, on foot, by train and by trolley, all their worldly goods, including numerous babies, upon their backs. They camped out on the bare flags of the court-yard surrounding the great church, and took part reverently in all the services. No matter how poor they were, each one bought a candle to put on the shrine of their dear Virgin of Guadalupe, who gave them all the blessings that they possessed!

The Spaniards of Mexico also have their patron saint, the Virgin of the Remedies, represented by an image brought out of Tenochtitlan by a Spanish soldier on the "Sad Night," and hidden in an Aztec temple where the Spaniards rested. It was discovered in 1535, a sanctuary was built around it, and it became the patron saint of the Spaniards during the three centuries of their rule. Our Lady of the Remedies was a bitter enemy of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and so when the Mexicans triumphed, the country repudiated her and she sank into oblivion, while her gentle rival

grew more and more popular. In recent times all classes in Mexico have united in honoring the Virgin of Guadalupe: the Catholics for religious reasons, the Liberals for patriotic ones; the Indians because she is their only goddess.

Another legend of the early Viceroy period deals with the founding of the city of Puebla, formerly called Puebla of the Angels. The friar Julian Garces, first bishop of the Tlascallans, wished to found a religious town where travelers on their way between the coast and the City of Mexico might rest. One night in a dream he saw a beautiful plain, watered by two rivers and many springs, with two great volcanoes on the west. As he looked, two angels with lines and rods measured boundaries on the ground, and marked places for streets and squares and public buildings. The bishop awoke and afterwards found the very place as he had seen it in his dream, and on this spot he founded the town of Puebla of the Angels, in the province of Tlascalla, in 1530, with the help of forty Spanish families and many joyful Indians. The angels who measured it out must have wept often over the fierce battles that have raged in and around it, for on account of its position on the highroad between Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico Puebla has figured in most of the Mexican wars.

Other cities not founded by miraculous aid, but nevertheless very picturesque and interesting, are

Guadalajara, Valladolid, now Morelia, and Guanajuato.

Guadalajara (Gwad-a-la-ha'-ra), now capital of the State of Jalisco in the western Sierra Madre, and the most beautiful city in Mexico, was founded by the first Viceroy, Mendoza, near the site where the cruel Nuno de Guzman, President of the first Audencia, who burned the King of the Michoacans alive because he could not or would not give him the gold he desired, had established a town under the pious name of Espiritu Santo (Holy Ghost). It is still a quaint and interesting old town, with many old Spanish houses whose thick wooden doors and beautifully wrought iron gates guard inner patios full of lovely flowers. Its climate is like June all the year around, and its high altitude makes the air dry and healthful.

Valladolid was also founded by Mendoza in the ancient and beautiful western kingdom of Michoacan, now the province of the same name. This belonged to the Tarascan Indians who preserved their kingdom till after the Conquest. Valladolid was founded with masses and days of festival, sixty Spanish families and many Tarascans being assembled. A beautiful cathedral, superior even to that in the City of Mexico, was finished in 1744. The name of this city was changed to Morelia during the last century, for a reason we shall read about later.

Life in the City of Mexico during the period of the

Viceroys was not without its troubles, in spite of a certain glamour and splendor. The city soon lost the reputation for brilliancy which had distinguished it at first, and became merely rich and sleepy. From the time of the Aztecs it had been subject to disastrous floods in rainy seasons, and early in the seventeenth century an engineer, Enrico Martinez, was called upon to prevent this. With the help of fifteen thousand Indians he built a tunnel to drain away the waters of Lake Zumpango, the highest of the lakes in the Mexican valley. But this did not entirely stop the floods, and an engineer from Holland, Adrian Boot, was called into consultation by the Viceroy, and recommended a system of dikes, which was built. This vexed the jealous Martinez, and during a very rainy season he closed up his tunnel, with the result that the city was covered with three feet of water. Thousands of Indians died, the Europeans left, people went about in canoes, as in Aztec times. Martinez was promptly put in prison. This did not help matters at all, however! He was released by the authorities, reopened his tunnel and rebuilt the dikes, and the waters subsided. But still the city was not free from floods, and later on Martinez' tunnel was replaced by an open canal, still to be seen, which caused a considerable fall in Lake Texcuco, so that the former island on which the city was built is now a part of the surrounding

plain. The final drainage of the valley was completed in 1898, by a firm of English engineers.

If life in the capital was insecure, that in the coast cities was still more dangerous. This was the age when pirates sailed the Spanish Main, "with a yo-heave-ho, and a bottle of rum!" Sir Francis Drake was a name to inspire terror among the Spanish sailors and settlers of the New World during the latter part of the sixteenth century. In various raids in these parts this gentlemanly person, who ate off fine silver and was accompanied by the younger sons of the English nobility, captured many millions of dollars' worth of gold, silver and precious stones from the Spanish mines. In 1577 he sailed for the Pacific Ocean, sacked several towns on that coast, and hid among the lonely caves of California, where he kept a sharp lookout for the yearly galleon laden with rich goods from the Philippine Islands. (These islands had been colonized from Mexico in 1564 and named for Philip II of Spain.) In due time he sighted her, sailed out, captured, and plundered her of her treasure. Later he destroyed St. Augustine in Florida. In 1683, more than a century later, Vera Cruz was besieged and sacked by pirates commanded by Van Horn, the robbers carrying away property to the amount of seven million dollars, while the inhabitants took refuge in the churches. Acapulco on the west coast, the center of the trade with China, the East Indies and the Philip-

pines, was captured by the English pirate Cavendish in 1587.

In 1697, the Jesuit Father Salvatierra with others of his order traveled to Lower California, hitherto only visited by pearl fishers, and began the work of converting the wild tribes at the foot of the Western Sierras along the Pacific coast. Their missions later passed into the hands of the Franciscans, who began to establish missions in Upper California in 1769. From this period date the mission churches of San Diego, Santa Barbara and others, which are still standing.

In 1692, the foundations of Pensacola in Florida were laid by the Spaniards, under the enterprising Viceroy Galvez.

In 1701, the passing of the monarchy of Spain from the house of Austria to that of Bourbon caused great convulsions in Europe, but affected Mexico very little. So loyal was the country to the reigning sovereign, whoever he was, that the new Bourbon King, Philip V, thought at one time of taking refuge there from the stormy scenes in Europe.

Seventeen hundred and fourteen marked the beginning of the colonization of Texas by the Jesuits. By the end of the next year several garrisons were established, and the Indians gave up their hunting life to settle around them, as long as the supply of gifts held out!

After a long period of viceroys, good, bad and indifferent, the energetic Count of Revilla-Gigedo, second viceroy of that name, arrived in Mexico in 1789. There are many stories about him. He found the capital in a very bad state, the streets filthy, unlighted and unpaved, Indian women selling tortillas in the Vice-regal Palace itself, and robbers abundant; and at once set about improving conditions. When, on walking through the city he saw something that needed attention, he sent instantly for the official responsible, adding to his message the magic phrase, "I await you here!" which of course made the latter rush to the spot.

It is said that one night this Count discovered a street which ended abruptly in a mass of wretched hovels. He immediately sent word to a certain officer that the street must be opened through to the end of the city before mass the next morning! The officer, knowing that it was a question of obey or lose his job, collected laborers and torches, and "all night long," says the historian, "the shouts of the workmen, the noise of pick-ax and crow-bar, the crash of falling roofs, and the rumbling of carts, kept the city in a fever of excitement." Precisely at sunrise the state carriage with the viceroy, his family and suite, left the palace and drove to the street in question. A thousand workmen, in double file, fell back on either side, shouting *vivas*. The street was open to the city wall

even as the viceroy had commanded, and at the end of it was the proud official, waiting, hat in hand, to receive a word of praise for his promptness. The same Street of Revilla-Gigedo is in the City of Mexico to this day.

Such actions on the part of a high official must have made an impression in the land where *manana* (to-morrow) was and still is the favored time for attending to business.

There is another interesting story of this Viceroy.

Among the *creole* nobles who made up the Viceroy's court was a certain Marques, who possessed two remarkably pretty daughters. They were born coquettes and gave their father much anxiety. One night the Marques was roused from his sleep by a message from the Viceroy, who awaited him in the palace. Much alarmed at the unusual summons, he dressed himself hastily and hurried to the palace, where he found the Viceroy in his cabinet, surrounded by several of his household.

"Marques," said the Viceroy, as soon as the nobleman entered, "my lieutenant here complains that you did not take proper care to secure the doors of your mansion last evening."

The Marques protested that both the great gate and the outer door were locked as usual.

"But have you not a rear gate opening into the next street?" asked the Count. "You must know that this

Festival Day on the Plaza.

watchful lieutenant of mine has saved you to-night from robbery."

"Robbery! Your excellency, is it possible?"

"Yes, and of the worst kind. The thieves were in the act of carrying off your most exquisite treasures —which are now restored to you."

At these words, a door at the side of the cabinet flew open, and the astonished Marques saw his two daughters, dressed for traveling, and in great confusion.

"And these are the robbers," added the Viceroy, pointing to a door on the opposite side, which also flew open. The Marques turned, and saw two of the gayest and handsomest, but also most dissipated youths of the court, whom he remembered as occasional visitors at his house. They were no less confused, and also alarmed.

"You see, Marques," said the Count, "that but for the watchfulness of my police, you would have had the honor of being father-in-law to two of the greatest scamps in my viceroyalty. See what a dilemma your carelessness has brought me into, my dear sir! I am obliged to wound the feelings of two of the most lovely ladies in my court, to save them from the machinations of scoundrels unworthy of their charms, and I fear they will never forgive me! Farewell, Senor Marques; take my advice, and brick up your rear gate. As for these young scapegraces, they sail in the next

galleon for Manila, where they can exercise their fascinating powers on the native Philippine women!"

This efficient and all-seeing Viceroy was one of the last to wield the royal authority in Mexico. Spain, so brilliant and powerful when Mexico was first discovered, was now growing steadily weaker. In 1818 the conqueror Napoleon desposed the Spanish King, Ferdinand VII, and placed Joseph Bonaparte on the throne. This caused a thrill of disquiet in Mexico and weakened the feeling of loyalty to the mother-country. At this time there came over a new Viceroy, Iturigarray, who, though a public-spirited ruler, incurred the displeasure of the Audencia, who suspected that he meant to seize the government for himself. Supported by many Spanish citizens, they took possession of the Vice-regal Palace, seized and imprisoned Iturigarray and shipped him back to Spain. Thereby they showed how easily such things are done, and started a long train of political explosions which have continued up to the present time.

The overthrowing of Iturigarray was only a little diversion of the ruling Spaniards; but another movement of greater importance was in the air. This was the real Revolution which was to end in separation from Spain. It was brought about by the growing discontent of the native Mexicans, both upper and lower classes, under Spanish rule. The upper classes, consisting of *creoles,* or people of Spanish blood born

in Mexico, and *mestizos,* people part Spanish and part Indian, resented bitterly the fact that all the important offices in the colony were given only to those who had been born in Spain. They also objected to the strict rules laid down by the mother country against foreign trade and domestic manufactures. All commerce between Mexico and the rest of the world except Spain was forbidden under penalty of death. Mexico was not allowed to produce anything that might be bought in Spain. Such industries as olive-growing and silk-producing, so well adapted to the country, were strictly forbidden. Mexico's only reason for existence in the eyes of Spain seemed to be to produce precious metals: gold, gold, and still more gold. More than *ten billions* of riches had already been taken out of the country to give to Spain, and still the grasping mother was unsatisfied! Then, too, there was a most unjust rule by which soldiers and ecclesiastics in Mexico could not be tried in the ordinary courts but only in their own special tribunals. This had the effect of making them irresponsible for their acts to the world at large, and led to many instances of oppression. The lower classes in Mexico had every reason to feel rebellious, as they were practically serfs in the mines and on the *haciendas* or estates.

The seeds of liberty were blown into the country by every wind from the free Republic at the north, and carried by every traveler from France. The hour of

the Great Revolution was indeed approaching. But since it was a long-drawn-out affair, quite bewildering in its many twists and turns, we shall tell of it in the simplest possible way, in story instead of history form. Let us listen, then, to Pipila's Story of the Revolution.

CHAPTER XIV

THE REVOLUTION FOR INDEPENDENCE[1]

(As Told by Pipila)

So, Senorita, you would have me tell the young Senors and Senoritas of the United States the story of how my country won her liberty? Very well. Only you must put down every word just as I say it, for I, Pipila, had an ancestor who was in these very events, and what is more, was a great hero; and his account of these matters and of his own part therein has been handed down in our family; so that I can tell you exactly what happened.

[1] This account of the Mexican Revolution for Independence is historically correct, though the modern Pipila who tells the tale is an imaginary character. The Pipila who set fire to the door at Guanajuato was a real person, however, his deed being described on page 33 of L. Gutierrez De Lara's and Edgcumb Pinchon's "The Mexican People." Also in Susan Hale's "Story of Mexico." Here he is called Pipiea, and described as a small boy. The present author has preferred to follow De Lara's version. History being properly the study of humanity at various epochs, she makes no apology for using this human incident in the construction of a chapter which may make the story of the Revolution more appealing to young readers, and possibly older ones, than a dry recital of facts and battles would be. The reader will find a more detailed account of the Revolution of 1810 in any of the admirable histories of Mexico mentioned in the List of References given in the front of the book.

In the first place, Senorita, you must know that we Mexicans suffered much during the three long centuries the Spaniards were in power. For the cruel Spaniards took away from us our lands—the lands which our ancestors held in common—and forced us to labor like the meanest slaves. No wages did we get, we who should have owned the country; nothing but the coarsest food, rags, blows and abuse.

But, you say, we had the Church to help us. She was rich—the images of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in the churches even in the poorest villages were blazing with gold and jewels—surely she did not look on tamely and see us abused. Ah, Senorita, you are wrong. In old, old times, when the Spaniards first came, I have heard that the priests were kind to my ancestors, protected them from the cruelty of the Spaniards, gave them excellent instruction and allowed them to live in peace and receive some of the fruits of their toil. But in later times that was all changed. The Church had grown too rich, too powerful. Such riches and such power are dangerous for the soul. The priests, instead of setting an example to us, were men of bad lives. Ah, what goings on there were in the monasteries scattered over the land you would hardly believe, and indeed it would be a shame to tell you. And on the great estates of the Church, the poor peons were more badly used than elsewhere. Those were indeed hard times, Senorita. It was still many years

after the Revolution in your great country, and yet my poor forbears were so ignorant that they did not think it possible for men to throw off the yoke of the oppressor.

But here and there in Mexico were men of better education, who learned of what you call the American Revolution (there is more than one *American* Revolution, Senorita), and of that other great Revolution in France which overthrew the aristocrats who oppressed the French peons so sorely. And these men —they were brave and clever, you may believe—began to ask themselves, why should we not do this in Mexico? Why should we suffer forever in silence? Why not tell the poor people what other people in other lands have done, and make great armies of them, and lead them to victory?

Ah, little did the Spaniards realize what was in the air. True, they learned of conspiracies here and there —they put the Intellectuals, as the clever men were called, in prison now and again—but never did they dream that the Indian peasants would have the strength and courage to rise against them!

Now one of the clever men I spoke of was Miguel Hidalgo; and would you believe it, he was a priest of the Church! But that when you think of it is not so strange, for was not Jesus Christ himself, the founder of the Church, a man of ideas, who cared for the common people? And this priest cared more for what

Jesus taught than for what the dignitaries of the Church said. Indeed, he had already run afoul of these same dignitaries, and been summoned before the Holy Inquisition to account for his views; but he answered them so reasonably that they let him go. For this Curé Hidalgo was a man of some education. He could understand French, even! and had taught at the college of San Nicolas, in Valladolid. But now he was curé of the little village of Dolores, in the very rich state of Guanajuato, which is full of mines of silver and gold and other precious metals.

Father Hidalgo, though he had studied much, was a practical man. He desired to help his people, who were very poor and oppressed by the mine-owners, and so he started factories for them to work in at good wages. Weaving and pottery factories—from time immemorial we Mexicans have been able to make very pretty cloths and also earthen vessels of all sorts—and he also started a blacksmith's shop, and a farm with mulberry vines for silkworms.

But the Spaniards in power would have none of these things, for they did not wish to have any industry in the country, but all products must be brought from Spain, at such high prices that none but the rich could buy them. These Spaniards thereupon broke up the factories, and destroyed the vines which sheltered the silkworms of the good curé. Ah, they did not know

what they were planting in the heart of the curé Hidalgo when they tore up his precious vines!

"Very well!" said he to himself. "They will not let me help my people by any peaceful means. They will see now what I can do by force!"

At this time, Senorita,—it was, in fact, in the year 1810—there were other men of ideas in the country. Two of these were very fine young men, Lieutenant Aldama and Lieutenant Allende, of the King's army. Lieutenant Allende especially was well-born, of a Spanish father and Mexican mother, rich and handsome—handsome as an angel—yet in spite of being so favored by fortune, he desired to help his unfortunate brothers in Mexico. Hidalgo knew these young men and others like them. Somehow—such things happen easily in my country, Senorita—word flew from one to the other that they must join together and lead the natives in an uprising against the government. But not at once; there were arms to be collected and much to be prepared; they must not be in too much of a hurry.

But, behold, weeks before the uprising was to occur, came Aldama and Allende secretly in the dark midnight to the house of the good Curé Hidalgo.

"Our plans are discovered by the government," they told him. "We shall be arrested shortly."

The Curé Hidalgo was a man of courage, for all that up to now he had been a peaceful priest.

"Then we must act at once!" cried he.

Instantly he sent the alarm to a few of his friends in the village and before the half hour was over ten or more armed men hastened to him. With these and the young lieutenants the Curé Hidalgo marched to the town jail, where were many poor wretches unjustly confined for having opinions which did not please the government, or for no reason at all. These Hidalgo and his friends at once set free. It was the first act of liberation of the Revolution.

The Curé then hastened to his church, for by this time it was three o'clock, the hour for the peasants' mass, before they went to their long day's labor in the mines and fields. But there was no mass that day.

"My children," cried Hidalgo from the pulpit, "this day has come to us a new dispensation. Are you ready to receive it? Will you be free? Will you make the effort to recover from the hated Spaniards the lands stolen from your fathers three hundred years ago?"

"Yes! Yes!" the peons answered. "Down with the Spaniards!"

And who can blame them? For though the Spaniards may have been good in some points, Senorita, they were not good to the Mexicans. They were far, far worse than those whom you call Tories—you see I am educated, I have read your histories—than those Tories were to your ancestors; and yet you are proud, are you not, of having driven the Tories from your land?

But the priest, Hidalgo, gave his people a new cry. "Up With True Religion, and Down With False Government!"

"El Grito de Dolores," is called the movement that started that night, "The Cry of Dolores;" it has gone echoing down into history. Would you not be proud of your ancestors that had started that cry, Senorita?

For truly, one of my ancestors was in the thick of these events. That one was the old peon, Pipila, after whom I am named. He was one of Hidalgo's parishioners, and oh, how he loved the good curé. He has often described him to my grandfather, who has told it to me; a very vigorous, strongly built man, was this beloved priest, one who loved a joke, with a good red face and well-shaped head, but already advanced in years when these events began. And indeed, so was my ancestor, Pipila. But he too was still strong, as you shall see.

Well, when Pipila heard Father Hidalgo speak at the church that morning, he was set all on fire, so to speak, and determined to join the Revolution at any cost, though he had no gun and no weapon at all but his own two arms and a stout club. And in that he was like many others of the peons, for the Spaniards had not encouraged their having weapons, you may be sure.

Meanwhile, you understand, more and more natives were hastening into the little village of Dolores. For

it was only a few hours before the news of what had happened had spread far and wide among the peons. Things happen that way in Mexico. Even now, at the time of the present disturbances, in places where there is not the telephone and telegraph, the native Mexicans know of the movements of distant armies long before the white people. How is that? Is it some magic? Do not ask me. We Mexicans have secrets handed down from the native men who were in Anahuac long before the white people came. We were of very intelligent races, Senorita, not uneducated savages, you understand, like your red men, but races from the East, possibly, where there is much wisdom. Who knows?

At any rate, the peasants of the country heard, long before the Spaniards, of the Grito which the good Hidalgo had given, and they came hurrying to aid him. They were strange people for an army, poor farm laborers and mountain Indians; and as for arms, most of them, like my ancestor, had none at all; but some had arms they had fashioned for themselves, by stealth, perhaps at the curé's blacksmith shop. The good curé at first did not want to take these poor defenseless creatures on his march, but they insisted. They were men, Senorita, they would not stay behind while Hidalgo was fighting their cause.

So the very day after the midnight alarm, Hidalgo and the young officers and their band—there were six

hundred then—set forth on their march. And at every step of the way other natives joined them, so that in a few hours there were a thousand, then two thousand, and finally great numbers. Presently they came to a town—you would not know the name, Senorita, if I told it to you—and they entered and bade the inhabitants surrender. So taken by surprise were the Spaniards in the town that hardly one of them resisted. As for the other people, they were glad enough to have those of their blood get the upper hand, I can tell you. In passing a certain church, the curé took therefrom a banner containing a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and fixing it upon his lance, adopted it as the flag of the army. *"Viva la religion! Viva nuestra Madre Santisima de Guadalupe! Viva la America y muera el mal gobierno!"* ("Long live religion! Long live our most Holy Mother of Guadalupe! Long live America, and death to bad government.") And at this town they got arms, which came in very usefully, you may be sure. And this army of Hidalgo's went on and on, from one town to another in this region, and all of them fell quite peacefully into their hands, so greatly were the Spaniards surprised at the daring of these oppressed peasants.

But by and by the rebels—as the Spaniards called them, just as the British did your ancestors, Senorita—came to the strong, rich, mining city of Guanajuato, the "Silver City," which is built in a ravine, the houses

all crowded on top of one another as if on a stairway. Guarding all is the very strong fortress called the Castillo de Granaditas, where were six hundred Spanish soldiers all armed to the teeth, and well-trained, quite unlike Hidalgo's poor peasants, besides many other Spanish. At the head of them all was the Bishop, who directed operations; and aiding him were the Spanish mine-owners, very strong men, well-used to authority, who were prepared to battle to the utmost to defend the riches which they had wrung from the bowels of the earth through the forced toil of poor Indians.

Hidalgo and his peasants, of whom my ancestor Pipila was one, hesitated not at all, but made all preparations to attack this fortress. But truly it was a hard job, as you say in your country, Senorita, for the Spaniards had many cannon to mow down the enemy, besides all their guns, and we had barely a thousand muskets among us, and the shot from these spattered harmlessly against the stone walls of this strong fortress. But nevertheless the Mexicans began the attack.

Oh, how furiously they surged against those walls, and how incessantly they threw their stones at the castle. And how valiantly those with guns used them! And when the cannon balls plunged through the ranks, killing many, how others pressed forward to take their places. It was quite like the old days, Senorita, when the Aztecs besieged Cortes and his men in the palace

of Axayacatl. We natives are peaceable by nature and slow to revolt, but when we do rise, nothing stops us.

In the midst of all this fury of attack, what should happen but that a priest bearing a crucifix appeared upon the parapet of the Castillo and commanded us to withdraw! So long had the Church ruled over us for good or ill that he thought he had only to say the word and we would obey! But alas, that priest was speaking on the wrong side. We would have nothing more to do with the priests of the Spaniards. My people stoned him and his crucifix without remorse.

But still the great fortress appeared impregnable, and the Mexicans were losing their lives by the thousand in vain. What was there to do? Ah, Senorita, this is where my brave ancestor, Pipila, came to the front. He had a head, that man, though he was only an uneducated Indian. He looked at the fortress and he saw one spot in it less strong than the rest; the great door, which was of wood, though with strong iron bars and bolts. If the Mexicans could but set fire to that gate, thought Pipila, it would be easy then to force their way in. But how to do it? For the gate was well guarded, and whoever approached it would get a baptism of bullets that would usher him into the life to come without delay.

Pipila in despair cast his eyes to the ground. There what should he see but a large, flat paving-stone some-

what loosened from its mortar! Quick as thought he pried it up with his stick.

Now the turtle is an animal with which we are well acquainted in Mexico, and I for my part believe that Pipila on seeing this stone thought at once of the horny back of the turtle which the good God has given the beast to protect him from injury. For Pipila did a strange thing. He placed himself on his hands and knees like any four-footed animal, and requested those near him to put the large, flat stone on his back.

"Bind it on me with ropes," said he. "And bring me fire and a torch of fat pine!"

They did as he commanded, for they saw well that Pipila had some good reason. Then did this, my ancestor, who was already an old man, but of great strength, begin crawling on his hands and knees toward the great door of the fortress. Ah, how the bullets whizzed round him, yes, and even spattered like hail upon his back! But what did that matter, since it was of solid stone? Yes, that old Pipila was a good turtle that day! Not a bit did he mind what went on about him, but crawled with all his four feet as fast as he could go towards that door with the torch in his hand. When he reached it you can imagine what happened. The wood was thick, but it was old and dry. That torch which Pipila carried undid all the work of the Spanish soldiers. It burnt a hole in their fortress that let the Revolutionaries in!

So the strong Castillo de Granaditas fell into the hands of the Mexicans, Senorita, with all its soldiers and priests and mine-owners, with all their weapons, and also the great riches of the Spaniards. And since these had been wrung from us by force in the first place, we took them all back again; and greatly they helped us in our Revolution. The people of the town were with us in this struggle, and rose in our favor, killing many Spaniards.

As for Pipila, he survived the fight, and accompanied Hidalgo's army further on its march. I never heard that he was promoted for his deed, but doubtless that would not have been fitting, for he was only a poor, ignorant peon, and well advanced in years. But he received great glory among his comrades, and is even mentioned in the histories to this day. God grant that I, his namesake, may accomplish something noteworthy for the cause of freedom in these troubled times, Senorita!

You ask what further became of the army of our Revolution, and of its leader, Hidalgo. Ah, Senorita, all was not prosperity, and yet in the end, yes, in the end, they triumphed; even though by that time many, including our brave priest, were in Paradise with the angels. Shall I tell you the rest of the story of the Revolution, Senorita? Well, then, have patience, for there were many confusing events which happened, as is the way with our history. I think you of the North

know little of our Mexican deeds and heroes. And is it not strange, when we fought for independence, just as you did?

Hidalgo and his army next marched on the great city of Valladolid, now Morelia, and captured that with scarcely a struggle. And then they made preparations to march upon Mexico City. But meanwhile the Viceroy, Venetas, was aroused, and his army was even then marching to conquer the insurgents. And also the great dignitaries of the Church in the City of Mexico were hurling sermons and excommunications right and left at our good priest Hidalgo and all his comrades. They would bar them from all intercourse with Christians in this world and from Heaven in the world to come. And why should they wish to do that, when our cry was not against the Church, but against bad government? You may well ask. The Church in Mexico, Senorita, has too often been on the side of bad government, because that has upheld it in all its unjust power and privileges. But these insurgents cared not at all for the excommunications. Perhaps they thought anything was better than the life the Church already had made them suffer. And was not the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe on their side? They marched on.

On the Hill of Las Cruces, not far from the City of Mexico, the two armies met; that of Hidalgo, and that of the Viceroy; and a terrible battle followed. The enemy used their artillery well, and more than ten

thousand Revolutionists lost their lives on that day. But such were our numbers and our courage that unarmed as many of us were, we completely destroyed the Viceroy's army. Not one was left alive on the field. As for the general himself, he escaped only because his horse was swift!

Having gained this great victory, the peons thought that of course Father Hidalgo would march at once upon the City of Mexico. But he did not do so. Why not? Some say that his compassionate heart feared the horrors that might follow if the Revolutionaries were let loose in the streets of the capital; others say that his messages to the people of the capital met with no response and he thought them hostile. At any rate, he turned about and led his army north. My ancestor Pipila was still with him. He was sorry indeed to turn his back upon the capital. He felt in his bones that it would come to no good.

And indeed in a short time Hidalgo with his army was attacked in great force by the Spanish general Calleja at Aculco, and badly defeated. The great army all melted away. Part of it went with Allende to Guanajuato, but Calleja pursued them there, and presently they had to leave Guanajuato and retreat to Zacatecas. Calleja then entered the mining city in triumph—and oh, what a terrible revenge he and his troops took upon the inhabitants of the city for having

aided the Revolutionists! You would not believe what cruelties they committed.

But meanwhile my ancestor Pipila was with Hidalgo in the north in Guadalajara. Though at first after the great defeat only a handful of men was left with the Curé, he was not discouraged, but set about gaining new recruits. These joined him in some numbers, and what is more, he established a government in Guadalajara, and received the title of Generalissimo of the Army of the Revolution, even as did your George Washington. And he sent a commissioner to the United States to ask for aid, but the man was captured by the Spaniards before he reached your border.

Now Calleja made plans to march with his terrible army to attack Hidalgo, and Aldama and Allende, knowing of it, hastened thither with their forces. And a great battle was fought at the Bridge of Calderon, near Guadalajara, when Hidalgo and his army, and the reinforcements of Allende and Aldama, tried to prevent the army of Calleja from coming further. It was a long and furious battle, and three times it looked as if the Revolutionaries would win, but they were at last defeated. My ancestor Pipila escaped as if by a miracle, and hid in the house of a friend in Guadalajara. And Hidalgo and Allende also escaped towards the north, and it was their hope that they could reach your country and recruit another army. But, alas, they

were captured by a force of Spanish in the desert, and taken to Chihuahua for trial.

At the trial Hidalgo made a speech, telling the Spaniards what it was the patriots hoped to do for their country. Ah, Senorita, it makes the Mexican heart glow with pride to read that speech, just as yours does when you read what Lincoln says at Gettysburg. For Hidalgo, like your Lincoln, was a great, simple man, one who could joke, yes, but with a heart as deep as the ocean; and what both desired above all was the welfare of their people. And though Hidalgo had never heard of government "of the people, by the people, and for the people," yet he said in other words that very same thing; namely, that he was fighting for a Congress in which every individual of his country should be represented; and that this Congress should pass laws to establish the brotherhood of man, the progress of fine arts, industry and commerce; and, above all—mark these good words—that it should *"recognize in every one without exception the right to enjoy the bounteous production of our rich lands, and the right to be happy, thus obeying God's fatherly commands to this country."* Ah, yes, that is what Hidalgo wished for his people—that they should enjoy the fruits of their toil, which they never had done since the Spaniards came, and that they should be happy. And to win them this, he gave everything, even his life.

For of course the Spaniards decreed that Hidalgo

should die. And of what happened on the day of his execution my ancestor, Pipila, who was still in hiding, heard afterwards from a native who was present in the service of the Spaniards, though his heart was on the other side. The Priest Hidalgo, being wakened early in the morning, walked to his execution as calmly as to early mass. On the way he stopped and sent a messenger back after something he had left under his pillow—some sweetmeats, all the valuables he had—and when they were brought he distributed them among the soldiers of the firing squad, as if they had been his children. And this done, he took his seat in the appointed chair, and raised his hand to his heart, to show them where to fire. And then the shots rang out, and all was over. The good Curé Hidalgo had gone to his reward.

Your George Washington was more fortunate, Senorita. But he was not more beloved by his people than is our hero. There is not a Mexican to-day, no matter how ignorant, who does not hold in reverence the name of Miguel Hidalgo. And the picture of this man hangs on the walls of the schoolrooms in the remotest Indian districts. The anniversary of the Grito de Dolores is one of the greatest of our national holidays.

Hidalgo's lieutenants, Aldama, Allende, and Jiminez, were no less unfortunate, all being executed. Indeed, Pipila, when he returned to Guanajuato, some time

after, saw the heads of all the four heroes placed on spikes on the four corners of the Castillo de Granaditas which they had conquered, but which had reverted to the Spaniards. But they did not stay there forever, Senorita. When the Revolution was ended the heads of these heroes were taken down and buried with all reverence in the Cathedral of the City of Mexico. And to-day in Guanajuato in the square in front of the Castillo de Granaditas, where the spike is still shown on which his head formerly hung, stands a bronze statue of Hidalgo the Liberator.

But now to tell you of the further happenings in the Revolution. When one man dies in a good cause, Senorita, always, always, there is found another to take his place. So now, at the death of Generalissimo Hidalgo, though the Revolutionists for the most part were scattered, still another priest, by the name of Juan Maria Morelos, upheld the cause in the South, being especially known for his defense of the village of Cuautla, where for sixty-two days he held the well-trained army of Calleja at bay, and then retreated with great skill, losing no men. Morelos was a fine man, the son of very poor parents, and had been dedicated by them at an early age to the career of mule-driver. He pursued this calling for some time, learning, one may say, patience and determination from his mules, and then, at the advanced age of thirty, entered the Academy of San Nicolas in Valladolid (now Morelia)

to study for the priesthood. And who should be his professor there but Miguel Hidalgo? Ah, Senorita, it was not alone priestcraft that they learned there at the Academy of San Nicolas, but much else of importance. And so when the Cry of Dolores was sounded in 1810, Father Morelos, then in charge of a parish, was one of the first to come to the aid of Father Hidalgo.

So he kept up the fight after Hidalgo had passed on, and defeated the royalists in many battles during the years 1812 and 1813. And during this time he called together the first National Mexican Congress at a city called Chilpantzingo, not far from the Pacific coast. And they framed a constitution, which provided that every male citizen of Mexico over eighteen years of age should vote, and set forth other just and liberal measures. Morelos, who received from this Congress the title of Generalissimo of the army, planned to take the Congress to Valladolid, his native city, and establish a government there; but he and his force were defeated just outside Valladolid by the combined forces of two Royalist commanders, one of whom was Augustin de Iturbide, a most efficient general, who pursued the Insurgents like a tiger hunting his prey. Of him you shall hear more later. Morelos escaped from him with only a few soldiers, and for months eluded the Royalists, but was finally captured as he and a small detachment were escorting his beloved Congress, of which he

was so proud, to Tehuacan in the extreme south. And that, you may imagine, was the end of the career of the brave Morelos, for he was taken to the City of Mexico and tried by the Holy Inquisition. The sentence pronounced upon him was death, and he was executed by the Spaniards in December, 1815. God rest his soul. He too had given his all for Liberty. But his ever-glorious name has been given to the city once called Valladolid, and also to the state containing the village of Cuautla, where he held out for so long against the Spaniards.

And now it looked surely as if the Revolution must be given up, for the Royalists were successful nearly everywhere. To add to this, a new Viceroy had come over, Juan de Apodoca, a man whose mouth dripped with promises and honeyed words, by this means winning many of our people over to his side. But a few stubborn spirits still held out, and in the distant mountains nursed the flickering flame of rebellion. The most renowned of these and the most hated by the Spaniards were Guadalupe Victoria and Vicente Guerrero. Guerrero, like Morelos, had been a mule-driver, and had joined the Revolution in its early days. We Mexicans tell of him that he was a thousand times defeated, a thousand times conqueror, and that his body was full of wounds. Yet always he fought on, winning at last in the years 1818 and 1819 several victories over the Spaniards, and making it possible for

a Revolutionary Congress again to hold meetings. Our people became encouraged and many fresh converts joined the ranks.

By now, Senorita, my great-grand-dad Pipila was well over his troubles, being dead, so I have no longer his account to give you; but what I tell you of the later events of the Revolution is all true, and you will find it so in the books.

You heard me speak of the Royalist General, Augustin de Iturbide, the Terrible. Now he was a native Mexican on his mother's side, and should have had sympathy with his people; but he was rich, and by nature aristocratic, so he cared not what became of the poor. And all this while he fought on the Royalist side. But presently things happened to make him change his mind—he and many other men and priests, who formerly had opposed the Revolution with all their might. But what these things were, our people at the time had no idea.

You see, the fighters off in the mountains little knew of the changes occurring in Spain. But it seems that a Liberal party not unlike our Revolutionaries had come into power there, and had forced the King, Ferdinand VII, to do just as they commanded, and make many changes in his government. He had to call a new Liberal Congress, choose Liberal ministers, abolish the Inquisition, free the press, and, in fact, not govern as he wished, but as his people wished.

Now this state of affairs alarmed the Royalists in Mexico very sorely. For they saw that when the new Liberal Viceroy, Juan O'Donoju (of Irish descent, Senorita, as one may tell by his name) should come over, all would not be so fine for them as it had been. They might lose some of their ill-gotten gains and privileges, and the people might gain some of the things for which they had been fighting. So these Royalists resolved that the time had come at last to join the Revolutionists in freeing the country from Spain; but not, like the Revolutionists, because they desired more freedom in Mexico, but because they desired less.[1]

General Iturbide, who was in sympathy with these plans, got himself the command in the South, where Guerrero was fighting, and after several unsuccessful

[1] The historians L. Gutierrez De Lara and Edgcumb Pinchon in "The Mexican People" are very explicit in giving the reasons why the Royalists desired independence from Spain as stated above. Other historians are more reticent, but I cannot find anything to contradict the opinion of the authors just quoted. Cf. the account of the reliable historian, Arthur Howard Noll, in "A Short History of Mexico." "When the liberal constitution was that year proclaimed in Spain it was evident to Iturbide that a crisis was pending in Mexico, and he determined to gain for himself a higher position in the new order of things than the Spanish government could offer, even if it succeeded in maintaining itself. He attached himself to the ecclesiastics and more politic of the Spaniards, creoles, and Mexican leaders, and after many conferences a program of action was duly adopted, though kept secret for a time. Independence and separation from Spain were to be secured, but by themselves, not by the already existing party of revolutionists, and by the terms of the compact a Mexican representative monarchy was to be erected, ruled by a King of Spanish royal blood. It was a scheme calculated to conciliate all the various factions in the country—to attract even the stanchest Royalists."

battles with this brave Insurgent chief, invited him to a conference. Guerrero attended. What was his surprise to find that Iturbide wished to join forces with him against the government! After some hesitation, he accepted, and handed over his command to Iturbide.

So the Revolutionary Army became very large and irresistible, and when the new Viceroy, Juan O'Donoju, arrived, he found the movement for independence in control of the whole country. So he and Iturbide met peaceably at Cordoba, and proclaimed Mexico independent from Spain. And soon after, the combined army of former Royalists and the Revolutionaries marched, amid great rejoicings, into the Capital. They called themselves the Army of the Three Guarantees, standing for Religion, Union, and Independence. Our flag to-day in its three colors symbolizes these guarantees: white for religion,[1] red for independence, green for union.

So, every one was happy, except possibly the peons, who had given so freely of their lives from the first in the cause of liberty, and who were now for a long time no better off than before. For the Army and the Church and the rich land-owners were still in power, and the peon had to toil for them without reward. Perhaps it was as well that my great-grandfather

[1] The religious guarantee established the Roman Catholic religion without toleration of any other.

Pipila had gone to his long rest, for there would have been no rest for him here below. But all the same, his was a good deed, and it was the flaming torch of Liberty that he carried that set fire to the Spanish door; and that torch kindled a fire in Mexico that has never yet gone out.

CHAPTER XV

ITURBIDE AND SANTA ANNA

On July 21, 1822, there occurred in the great Cathedral of the City of Mexico a solemn and imposing ceremony. This was the anointing and crowning of Iturbide and his wife as Emperor and Empress of Mexico. A strange result of the struggle of the democrats for freedom!

It was the Church and aristocracy, who had joined with the real Revolutionists to free the country from Spain, who had brought this about. The army, always under their influence, had first proclaimed Iturbide Emperor, and the movement had been referred by the general himself to Congress, which, with soldiers surrounding its hall, at once voted to the same effect.

But uneasy lies the head that wears a crown. Before a month had passed there was rebellion on all sides. The patriots of the Revolution had not fought, bled and died in order that the country should be ruled by an autocrat. Bravo, Guerrero, Victoria, all the old war-horses of the former struggle, took up the fight again. They had a new ally, a handsome young gen-

eral, of quiet and melancholy appearance but great energy—Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Santa Anna had first distinguished himself in Mexican warfare during the previous year by helping to expel the Royalists from Vera Cruz.

Iturbide meanwhile hastened his own downfall by arbitrarily dissolving Congress, raising forced loans, and issuing edicts in a truly despotic manner.

Suddenly, on the sixth of December, Santa Anna in Vera Cruz proclaimed the plan of Casa Mata, which made Mexico a Republic. It was approved by the army, and Iturbide suddenly found himself an Emperor without an Empire. Unwillingly he abdicated the throne he had held so short a time, and stole out of the capital, as so many defeated Mexican leaders have done before and since. Congress met at once and banished him from the country. In consideration of his great services during the Revolution, however, it voted him an annual income of $25,000 for life, provided that he stayed in Italy.

The ex-Emperor went to Italy, but he could not stay there! Mexico possesses a strange fascination, which lures her exiles back to her, even at the risk of their lives. Iturbide changed his residence to London, from which place, hearing of a threatened attempt by the Holy Alliance to restore Spanish power in Mexico, he wrote to Congress offering his services to prevent such action. Congress was very uneasy at receiving this

letter. Iturbide's popularity with the army was not forgotten, and it was feared that his return would bring about another revolution. Accordingly an act was passed ordering his execution as a traitor if he ever again set foot on Mexican soil.

Meanwhile the rash general had set forth from Southampton, England, with his family in a little sailing vessel. On the fourteenth of July, 1824, his ship appeared outside the port of Soto la Marina. Iturbide landed. He was recognized at once by the general of the troops of that part of the country, who arrested him, telling him that he had only a few hours to live. Iturbide was astounded. It was the first he had heard of the decree. In vain he begged for mercy. The authorities were pitiless. Five days after landing, the former Emperor was shot in front of the church at Padilla, declaring with his last breath:

"I die because I came to help you. I die gladly, because I die among you. I die with honor, not as a traitor!"

Some Mexicans consider Iturbide a hero. This is open to doubt. He does not stand with the best of Mexico's prominent men; but neither is he among the worst. He allowed his own longing for power and glory to interfere with the slow and faltering, but irresistible, movement of the country towards democracy, and it was for that reason that he was sacrificed. Mexican history is full of such events, which seem cruel

and violent, but are perhaps inevitable, considering the hot-blooded character of the people and the long-drawn-out conflict between their desire for liberty and the strong forces continually at work to thwart it.

Though Iturbide's emperorship cost him his life, his services to his country during the Revolution have won him grateful remembrance. The inscription placed on the house where he was born, in Morelia, contains enough of glory for any man. It reads simply:

ITURBIDE, LIBERTADOR DE MEXICO

The young general Santa Anna is the next figure to take the center of the stage in the Mexican drama—which now becomes as complicated of plot as a moving-picture weekly serial! The simile is especially appropriate, for Santa Anna resembles nothing so much as one of the deep, dark villains of these productions, who are foiled one week only to pop up serenely with fresh deeds of wickedness the next.

Don Felix Fernandez Victoria, the Revolutionary general, called by the people Guadalupe Victoria, because he was supposed to be especially favored by Our Lady of Guadalupe, was elected President of the new Mexican Republic in 1824. Wonderful to relate, his first two years in office passed without any disturbance. During Victoria's time Congress decreed the expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico. This was not strange, considering how cruel and arrogant the Spaniards had

been there, but it had the bad effect of driving much wealth and intelligence out of the country. This Congress also adopted the Constitution of 1824, a progressive document modeled somewhat after that of the United States. Unfortunately, it needed more than a Constitution to ensure progress in Mexico. The trouble with the country was and is, almost up to the present time, the absence of an intelligent middle class such as forms the greater part of the population of the United States and other prosperous countries. A public school system such as ours has never prevailed in Mexico. The peons who form the great mass of the population are almost entirely uneducated; they do not know how to protect themselves against the selfish military chieftains who wrestle for supremacy.

Another important action of Victoria's Congress was the throwing open of Texas to colonization from the United States.

Guadalupe Victoria managed to finish his term of office, though not without putting down two revolutions. In the presidential election of 1828, the existence of two great political parties was very evident. These were the Liberals and the Conservatives, the latter including the Church party. Pedraza, the Conservative candidate, was elected by two votes over Guerrero the Liberal. Upon this Santa Anna, who was then Liberal, headed an armed uprising, or, as the Mexican expression goes, *pronounced* against the government. Owing

to the disturbance, Pedraza finally left the Republic. Congress then declared in favor of Guerrero.

Just at this time Spain, somewhat late in the day, sent an expedition to recover her lost colony. Santa Anna, without waiting for any orders, fitted out a force in Vera Cruz and advanced against the invaders. He came, he saw, he conquered! The Spanish commander capitulated after two days and returned to Cuba with the remains of his army. Spain's power in Mexico was annihilated forever. Needless to say, General Santa Anna was showered with the thanks of his grateful people. He was made Minister of War and Commander in Chief of the army under President Guerrero.

No sooner did Santa Anna find himself in this commanding position than he used his power to overthrow Guerrero's government and put the Vice-President, Bustamente, in his place. Guerrero, having only a few troops faithful to him, withdrew to the mountains of the south, where he had held his own for so long during the Revolution. The government, that is, Bustamente and Santa Anna, finding that they could not dislodge him from there by fair means, paid a spy $27,000 to decoy him on board a sailing vessel at Acapulco, on which he was taken to another port, given a military trial, condemned to death, and shot. This murder of the brave old General, which occurred on

February 15, 1831, is one of the blackest blots on Santa Anna's far from spotless record.

Santa Anna did not long remain loyal to Bustamente, but pronounced again in favor of Pedraza, who was legally still President. However, early in 1833 Santa Anna condescended to become President himself, and was soon made Dictator by the devoted army. He presently had an opportunity to show his military skill in an expedition against the Texans.

The chapter of Texas is one of the saddest in Mexico's history, because it is so full of "might-have-beens." If Mexico had only possessed a firm government, instead of one as shifting as the sand, the Texan war would, in all human probability, never have happened, and Mexico would have been the richer by more than half a million square miles of valuable territory. The story of Texas is not altogether pleasant reading either to the nation who, secure in her strength and her strict obedience to the letter of the law, wrested by force of arms from a disorganized and weaker country so large a portion of her territory. The United States seemed in this affair altogether too like a big boy who made a little one's peevishness and bad behavior an excuse for depriving him of some coveted possession. But in 1848 "the rights of small nations" was not yet a popular phrase. When we contrast the present flourishing condition of California, New Mexico, Arizona and

Texas with the distracting state of things just across the border, we cannot help feeling that our action, selfish as it may have been, has turned out for the best. But that doesn't make the Mexicans love us any the better!

CHAPTER XVI

THE REVOLT OF TEXAS

Mexico, after the founding of the Republic in 1824, had thrown wide open to foreigners the northern part of her domain, the far-flung stretches of grassy prairies and sandy deserts included in the Mexican State of Texas. From one point of view she did well, for all former attempts on her part and that of Spain to colonize this tract of land had failed ignominiously. In vain had the courageous missionaries, backed up by soldiers, tried to establish posts and missions in this region for nearly three centuries. Few of these settlements were lasting. The Indians of the east were not attracted by the tame life of labor and obedience offered them by the priests; they lived near the missions only as long as the supply of gifts held out, and then went back to their roving existence. The western missions were harassed and often destroyed by the fierce Comanches and Apaches, the scourge of Mexico's northern border. Until the last quarter of the 17th century there was no Spanish settlement east or north of the Rio Grande except Santa Fé, and no other, in-

deed, in the whole of the Gulf shore region between that and San Augustin in Florida.

Meanwhile, the brave attempt of the French under La Salle and others to plant colonies at the mouth of the Mississippi and in Texas in the Gulf region only resulted in keeping a hold in that part of the country for England. In 1803 Napoleon sold Louisiana to the United States. This meant the land from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains and from Canada to Mexico, and took in nearly all of Texas. But in 1819, the United States in purchasing Florida from Spain gave it Texas in exchange.

Thus in the early part of the 19th century, Spain and England faced each other across the indeterminate border separating Texas from the American territory. At this time, all that remained of the twenty-five missions and forts founded first and last in Texas soil by the Spanish were the little Spanish settlements of San Antonio (or Bejas), Goliad (or La Bahia), and Nacogdoches.

The Anglo-Americans had begun to enter Texas before the end of the 18th century. During the years 1799 to 1801, a mysterious individual named Thomas Nolan, a protégé of General James Wilkinson, commander-in-chief of the United States army, made several expeditions into the Spanish province with a gang of men, ostensibly to trade for wild horses. The Spaniards feared, not without reason, that he meant to con-

quer Texas with the help of the Indians. The Spanish soldiers attacked his camp at the south fork of the Red River. Nolan was killed and the little band captured. A Quaker, Ephraim Blackburn, was chosen by lot to be hanged. The rest were sent to Spanish penal settlements. Thus were the Spanish ideas of justice satisfied.

The ferocity of the Spanish could not keep the wild characters of the pioneer states of Kentucky, Louisiana, and other parts of the southwest from entering their territory. When the Revolution began in Mexico, such men sympathized with the insurgents in their struggle for independence. Gutierrez, one of Hidalgo's officers, having fled from Mexico, entered again from the Texas side, and easily succeeded in getting an ex-lieutenant of the United States army and one hundred and fifty-eight daring men to join him. Many of these came from a tract of land called the Neutral Ground, because, owing to border disputes, it belonged neither to the United States nor to Spain, and afforded a resort for desperadoes. This expedition was soon in the thick of the Revolutionary struggle, but found the warfare, in which the wounded and captured of the opposite side were always butchered, too bloody for their Anglo-Saxon tastes, and escaped from it as soon as possible.

Still another party, led by James Long, organized a filibustering expedition into Texas in 1821. Their plan was to make Texas an independent republic.

They were helped by the Mexican Liberals and were well treated on the whole, but the affair was not successful.

During the first years of the 19th century, the Gulf coast of Texas swarmed with pirates, who found the dangerous, low-lying shores, protected by long, bare islands, ideal places of refuge. Galveston Island, opposite Galveston Bay at the mouth of the Trinity, was a noted pirate and slave-trading rendezvous, sheltering at one time over four hundred men of these gentle professions. The most celebrated pirate of this period was Jean Lafitte, who had plied his trade in the West Indies, and then off the Island of Barataria near the mouth of the Mississippi. He ran an organized government on Galveston Island, which was in touch with the Liberal government in Mexico. He built fortifications on the site of the present city of Galveston, and the flourishing town of Campeachy sprang up, founded on piracy. He claimed that he only attacked Spanish ships, and that he felt justified by the cruel treatment he had once received from a Spanish captain; but his men were not narrow in their views, and preyed upon United States vessels also. The attention of the government at Washington was finally drawn to these merry men, and their nest was rudely destroyed.

Meanwhile, settlers of a better class than filibusterers and pirates had their eyes on Texas. In 1819, a New Englander, Moses Austin, who had lived some time in

Missouri, determined to found a colony there. He died before he could carry out his purpose, but his son Stephen took up the project and entered the country with a few men just in time to witness the rejoicings at the news of the independence of Mexico. After much trouble and many journeys to the City of Mexico, he obtained permission from the authorities to establish his colony with three hundred families; and this colony after two years of weakness and insecurity took root and flourished. It was the beginning of the modern population of Texas; a sturdy slip of Anglo-Saxon civilization planted in Mexican soil. Of course, these hardy, adventurous men did not change their character or adopt Mexican ways when they moved across the Rio Grande. From the first they clung to their own institutions, including slavery, free speech, popular elections, and practical self-government.

At that time Texas was joined with the neighboring State of Coahuila. In 1825, this joint state passed a law encouraging immigration. It invited the entry of immigrants and guaranteed them security of person and property and the right to engage in any calling they might choose. The persons who brought in colonists were called *empresarios*. Many immigrants were thus attracted. In 1827, there were ten thousand people there, exclusive of Indians, and in 1830, nearly twenty thousand. Austin's colony continued to be the main influence. The United States had succeeded in a few

years in a colonization which the Spaniards had failed to accomplish during three centuries.

It was not long before the Mexicans regretted this state of things. In the first flush of success, the new Republic had wished to open its gates to the Republic at the north; but soon differences of race and temperament began to make themselves felt. Besides, Mexico knew that the United States secretly longed to possess Texas, for she had twice made offers to purchase it—offers which were indignantly refused.

Under Bustamente's government, Mexico passed laws which made colonization by the Americans difficult, and in 1830, she forbade colonization in Texas altogether. Laws by which the colonists had been protected were repealed, troops were stationed at various points in Texas, and forts built at the most thriving towns of the colonists. The civil authority held by the *empresarios* was taken away, and martial law substituted.

As an example of the way these things were managed —a Mexican colonel entered upon his duties in Goliad by holding up the Mayor of the town at the point of the gun, and forcing him to deliver up the funds of the municipal treasury to the amount of five thousand dollars. He then proceeded forcibly to disarm the citizens of the district of Bejar, which was especially open to the attacks of the Indians. He impressed the best of the citizens into the army and finally compelled every family to support five soldiers.

The American frontiersmen were not people to stand this sort of treatment quietly. They organized for defense and captured nearly all of the Spanish forts. In so doing, they proclaimed, and rightly, that they were fighting for the defense of their homes and of the Mexican Constitution of 1824, which had been cast aside by the present military despots. They had as yet no desire to separate from the Republic, but invited the other Mexican states to join them. They formed a temporary government, elected a governor, and appointed General Sam Houston commander-in-chief of their army.

Sam Houston was a picturesque border character, Scotch-Irish by birth and Cherokee-Indian by adoption, who had worked up from early surroundings ruder even than Lincoln's, to become Governor of Tennessee, and then a Member of the National Congress. After consultation with President Andrew Jackson, he left Washington suddenly and appeared in Texas. He made no secret of the fact that he had come to conquer Texas from the Mexicans. The Texans flocked to his standard. Nevertheless, his army never numbered more than ten thousand men, poorly equipped with rifles and hunting-knives. With these he planned to wrest Texas from a country having a population of eight millions and a large standing army.

It was at this juncture that Santa Anna flew to the north to stamp out the rebellion. In February, 1836,

he arrived with a large number of soldiers before San Antonio. Colonel Travis, a brave young Texan officer, withdrew to the Alamo, a deserted mission, named after the cottonwood trees growing near by, with about one hundred and fifty men, including the celebrated fighter, Davy Crockett. Santa Anna and his soldiers began the siege of this building. Travis had sent a messenger for reinforcements, saying in his letter, "I will never surrender or retreat." He kept his word. The reinforcements did not come. He and his men fought desperately, in the face of overwhelming odds. Their struggle was of course hopeless.

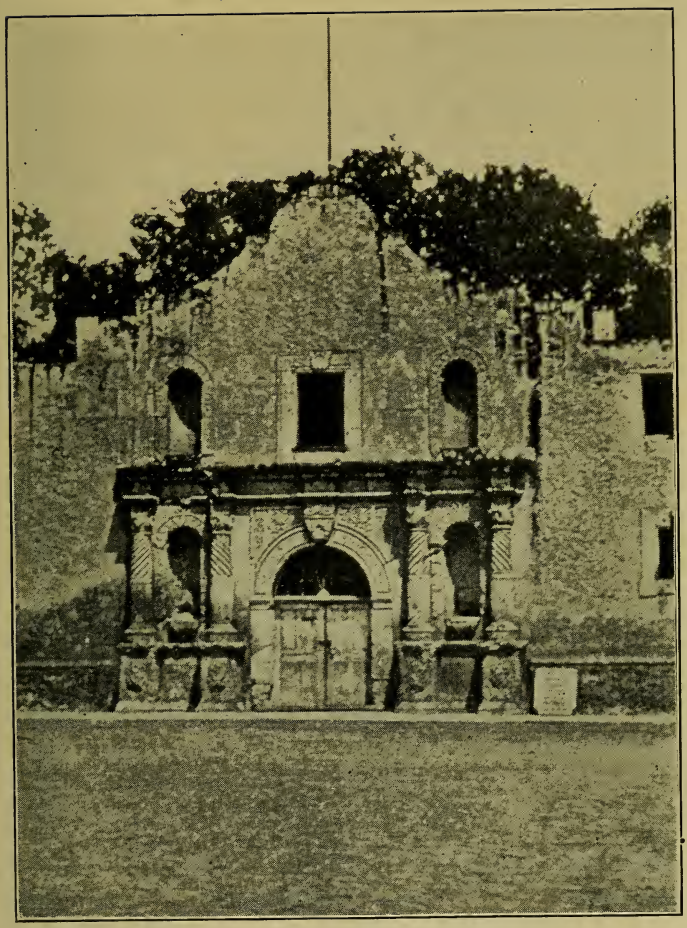
At four o'clock on the morning of Sunday, March 6, the Mexicans made an assault and carried the garrison. Santa Anna and his soldiers swarmed in through the breaches and over the walls. Of all the garrison, all but four or five died fighting. Those were shot down in cold blood by the bloodthirsty commanding officer. Another laurel was added to Santa Anna's wreath—the Massacre of the Alamo. It was to sting him like a nettle before very long.

At Goliad, shortly after, Santa Anna was responsible for the murder of sixty wounded Texans who had surrendered on condition that they should be treated as prisoners of war according to the usages of civilized nations.

These outrages, like the "frightfulness" of the Germans at the present time, did not daunt the enemy, but

only aroused in them a firmer determination to conquer. At the battle of the San Jacinto River on the twenty-first of April, 1836, a small number of Americans under General Houston, charging to the war-cry of "Remember the Alamo," defeated about 1500 Mexicans. The Texans lost only 8 killed and 17 wounded; they captured seven hundred of the enemy, including the redoubtable Santa Anna himself. The Texans wished the latter to have the fate he had meted out to so many others, but General Houston spared him. He signed a treaty promising to cease hostilities; went to Washington, where he was entertained by President Jackson; the next year was released, on the promise to go home and secure the Mexican recognition of Texan independence. Of course, when he reached Mexico, he did nothing of the sort, but busied himself in making excuses for the failure of his campaign, and in explaining that he had only signed the treaty under force and had not meant a word of it. Being still coldly received by the Mexicans, he retreated to his hacienda, to wait until the memory of recent events should blow over.

He soon had an opportunity to regain his prestige. In 1838, the French government sent a fleet to Mexico to demand payment of damages incurred by French citizens during the recent wars. The chief of these was a claim of $60,000 for pastry stolen from a French cook by revolutionists; therefore the whole affair was called "The Claim for Pie," or "The Pastry War,"



The Alamo.

under which name it has gone down into history. The Mexican government refused to pay, whereupon the French forces under the Prince de Joinville captured the fortress of San Juan de Ulua and occupied Vera Cruz on December 5, 1838. Six hundred Mexicans were killed in the struggle.

Santa Anna hastened to the sea-coast and defeated the foreigners at Vera Cruz in a well-fought battle, and forced them to return to their ships. During the fighting he was wounded severely in one leg, which had to be amputated. From now on he possessed a firm hold on the nation's gratitude! He purchased a wooden leg, and afterwards, at the height of his popularity, had the missing part of his anatomy interred with great ceremony in the Cathedral in the City of Mexico.

Mexico, however, finally paid the French claim.

CHAPTER XVII

WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES

Texas was now an independent republic. On the red, white and blue of her flag she displayed a lone star; and in the hearts of her people the memory of the Alamo and the other Mexican atrocities was burned so deep that they were ready to shed the last drop of their blood to defend their newly gained freedom. But the short-sighted politicians at the Mexican capital did not realize this. They talked boastfully of reconquering Texas; but they were so busy in starting revolutions or in holding their own against them that when it came to the point they could spend neither the time nor the money for a serious effort. The few expeditions that were sent against the former province only had the effect of exasperating the Texans and increasing the desire already felt by the Anglo-Saxons to defend themselves by joining with the strong nation of their own blood at the north.

Twice during the next few years, during Andrew Jackson's administration and Van Buren's, Texas peti-

tioned to be annexed to the United States, and twice it was refused. Doubtless there was a feeling in the United States that such action would lead to trouble with Mexico; there were also internal political reasons against it. Slavery was beginning to agitate the nation. The South wished for the admission of Texas because it would increase the extent of slave-holding territory; the Northerners were opposed to it for that reason. During Polk's administration the Republic of the Lone Star again knocked at our gates; this time the Southern element gained the day, and she was admitted, in March, 1845.

Mexico resented this step bitterly. In fact, she had previously warned us that if Texas was annexed, it meant war. General Almonte, the Mexican Ambassador in Washington, called the annexation an act of aggression, "the most unjust which can be found in modern history," demanded his passports and left the country. Owing to the unsettled state of Mexico, the United States had no representative there at the time; but it now sent a special envoy, John Slidell, to treat of the matter of Texas and the boundary disputes involved in it. Herrera, who occupied the Presidential chair at that time, agreed to receive him; but by the time Slidell reached Mexico, Herrera was overthrown, and General Parades was in power. Parades was a monarchist, hated the United States, and refused to receive our envoy. Thus the two nations, on the verge of war,

had no way to settle their difficulties. Mexico would neither declare war outright nor treat of peace.

The Mexicans, ignorant and deceived by their fiery military leaders, were eager to go to war with the United States. They were sure that they, fighters and descendants of fighters, could easily conquer the cowardly, peace-loving Northerners. Troops hastened to the northern border. At the same time President Polk sent General Zachary Taylor, the hero of the Florida war with the Seminoles, to the mouth of the Rio Grande with orders to repel any invasion of the Texan territory that might be attempted by Mexican forces.

The United States considered the Rio Grande the southern boundary of Texas; the Mexicans declared that the Nueces, some distance to the north, was the boundary. With two armies facing each other across disputed ground, an encounter was sure to take place. It came when a party of Taylor's dragoons were attacked in April, 1846, in what the United States thought Texas territory, by Mexican soldiers in ambush. When the news reached the United States, the whole country was in a blaze of excitement. Congress voted ten millions to carry on the war. Thousands of volunteers flocked to the recruiting offices. "Remember the Alamo" became the watchword. The real rights and wrongs of the war were disregarded. It was enough that American blood had been shed on Texas soil.

Shortly after this encounter, Taylor's regulars de-

feated the Mexicans at Palo Alto and the following day at Resaca de Palma, in Texas. The Mexicans fled in wild disorder, leaving all their camp equipment and baggage behind. General Arista was recalled and General Ampudia sent to take his place. General Taylor marched his forces across the Rio Grande on the seventeenth of May, and the invasion of Mexico was begun in earnest.

General Taylor, "Old Rough-and-Ready," as he was called, was as different as possible from the pretentious Mexican officers. He looked like a respectable old farmer, never wore a uniform unless it was absolutely necessary, but dressed most of the time in an old linen suit and slouch hat, with, if the weather were cold, a disreputable brown army overcoat, a relic of the Florida campaign. The story is told that once during the Texas campaign he was notified that he was to receive a visit from a Commodore of the navy, who was noted for his spic-and-span appearance. To compliment his visitor and the navy, General Taylor made a heroic effort, delved at the bottom of an old chest, "and pulled out a uniform coat, that had peacefully slumbered for years in undisturbed quietude, slipped himself into it, in his haste fastening it so that one side of the standing collar was three button-holes above the other," and, very uncomfortable, waited for the expected visitor. In the meantime the Commodore, knowing of Taylor's aversion to full-dress, clothed himself in his plainest

apparel. When the two heroes met, each was filled with astonishment at the other's appearance. After that time, General Taylor "took to linen roundabouts of the largest dimensions with more pertinacity than ever." His headquarters was an ordinary tent; his dispatch table a couple of rough boxes painted blue. He was very democratic in his manners, and adored by all the soldiers.

As our army advanced into Mexico, they expected desperate resistance, and were surprised to find one little pueblo after another deserted, and no sign of the enemy but an occasional body of cavalry appearing and reappearing in the distance. The Mexicans were apparently concentrating at Monterey. The United States soldiers pressed on, until, tired and dusty after many days' march, from a point in the hills they came in sight of this city, the key to the north, very picturesque in its lovely, mountain-girt plain, with its spires and flat-roofed Spanish houses of various colors. The soldiers gazed at it with mixed feelings, for anxious as they were to attack, they saw that it was exceedingly well fortified and could not be taken without a hard struggle. Towering over the city at the right, on a spur of the mountains, was the Bishop's Palace, now used as a fortress; in the center of the town was a very strong citadel; each house was converted into a fortification, and the city itself was surrounded by thick stone walls, with ditches and bastions, bristling with cannon.

A garrison of ten thousand soldiers was preparing to hold the place, with the help of the inhabitants, who were anxious to fight. General Taylor's force consisted only of about seven thousand men.

Undismayed, General Taylor established his camp and made his plans. Soon the Americans began their attack. The fight lasted for four days. The Bishop's Palace, though strongly defended, was stormed and taken. The Americans fought their way into the town, tunneling through the walls of houses to gain cover for their advance. It became a hand-to-hand and house-to-house fight, in which the Mexicans resisted bravely, but were finally overcome. Taylor was in the thick of it, walking leisurely about the streets directing his men under a rain of bullets, quite oblivious to danger. On the twenty-fifth of September General Ampudia evacuated the town and retreated to Saltillo. Taylor was criticized by the politicians at Washington for allowing him to leave with all his men and the honors of war; but history has fully justified him, for with his small army and far from the base of supplies he could not take care of a large body of prisoners.

The loss of Monterey taught Mexico that the United States soldiers could fight. All was confusion and dismay at the capital. Up to this time Parades had been so busy trying to turn Mexico into a monarchy that he had paid little attention to the invaders at the north. Now, however, he was aroused, and was preparing to

lead an army to the north, when he was suddenly ousted by the army, who pronounced in favor of Santa Anna.

That redoubtable general, having been coldly received in Mexico after he lost the first campaign in Texas, had retired to Havana. Now he hastened back. The United States squadron was then blockading the Mexican ports, but Santa Anna slipped through on a pass which had been given him some time before. The Mexicans, forgetting their grudge, now hailed him as their deliverer. He was offered the dictatorship, but declined it in order to become Commander in Chief of the army. He was afterwards made Provisional President.

"I will die fighting," he declared, in his letter of acceptance, "or lead the valiant Mexicans to the enjoyment of a triumph. . . . I will lend my aid to the service of my country, or perish amid its ruins!" Full of these noble sentiments, he bade his friends at the capital a tender farewell, and hastened to the seat of war, arriving at San Luis Potosi with his troops on the eighth of October.

In the meantime the main command of the American army had been taken away from General Taylor and given to General Winfield Scott, who with a large force set sail for Vera Cruz. Many of Taylor's men had been ordered to march overland to join them, which left old "Rough-and-Ready" with but a few troops to meet the renowned Santa Anna with about four times as

many. It was an anxious period for the little American army in the heart of a hostile country, as the opposing forces drew near. General Taylor made his dispositions with great care. He thought it best to meet Santa Anna at a ravine called Buena Vista just beyond the pass from the mountain road which led from San Luis Potosi. Here a decisive battle took place—one of the most remarkable ones in our history.

If the Mexicans still had doubts as to whether the Yankees could fight, they lost them now. A Captain Pike, who commanded a company of Arkansas cavalry in this engagement, and who seems to have been nearly as mighty with the pen as with the sword, has written some verses about it which may have faults as poetry, but are so full of spirit that I cannot help quoting them.

From the Rio Grande's waters to the icy lakes of Maine,
Let all exult, for we have met the enemy again.
Beneath their stern old mountains we have met them in their pride,
And rolled from Buena Vista back the battle's bloody tide;
Where the enemy came surging, like the Mississippi's flood,
And the reaper Death was busy, with his sickle red with blood.

Santa Anna boasted loudly that before two hours were past
His lancers through Saltillo should pursue us thick and fast.
On came his solid infantry, line marching after line.
Lo, their great standards in the sun like sheets of silver shine!
With thousands upon thousands, yea, with more than four to one,
A forest of bright bayonets gleamed fiercely in the sun!

Lo! Guanajuato's regiment! Lo! Puebla's boasted corps!
And Guadalajara's chosen troops! All veterans, tried before.
And, galloping upon the right, four thousand lances gleam,
Where, waving in the morning light, their blood-red pennons
stream.
And there, his stern artillery climbs up the broad plateau.
To-day, he means to strike at us an overwhelming blow.

(Here follow stanzas describing the battle in detail. It was very fierce, and for a while things looked badly for the Americans. But in the end—)

Still sullenly the cannon roared—but died away at last;
And o'er the dead and dying came the evening shadows fast.
And then above the mountains rose the cold moon's silver
shield,
And patiently and pityingly looked down upon the field.
And careless of his wounded, and neglectful of his dead,
Despairingly and sullen, in the night Santa Anna fled!

(He retreated to San Luis Potosi with fragments of his fine army.)

On the night after the battle of Buena Vista the final result was yet unknown, and the men were anxious, expecting to make an assault next day. Everybody wondered what General Taylor was planning. To their surprise, his tent was dark and quiet. His negro servant, upon being questioned, said, smilingly,

"I 'spec he fast asleep, captain, for he eat a monstrous hearty supper, and when he eat a big supper he sleep berry hard and sound, and I reckon you won't see

de old hos' 'fore four o'clock in de mornin'! Listen, you hear him snore clean out here."

General Taylor's snores carried joy to the camp. Everything must be all right, if "Rough-and-Ready" slept.

This battle, so disastrous to the Mexican cause, was the triumph Santa Anna had promised the people of Mexico! But instead of dying, the General sat down, very much alive, and wrote his dispatches so cleverly that the Mexicans for a long time believed that they had won the battle! Santa Anna was soon recalled from San Luis Potosi to put down an insurrection in the capital, and General Taylor with his troops was left in undisputed possession of the north of Mexico.

In March, 1847, shortly after the battle of Buena Vista, General Winfield Scott at the head of an army of about 12,000 men, reached the harbor at Vera Cruz and summoned that city to surrender. The general in command of the garrison refused. Scott accordingly landed his troops and began a bombardment of the city. A continuous rain of shot and shell was kept up for four days, killing many Mexicans, including non-combatants who could not find shelter. On the twenty-seventh of March the city surrendered. The Mexican troops were allowed to salute their flag and march out with honors of war, and civil and religious rights were guaranteed to the inhabitants.

The occupation of Vera Cruz was a great blow to

the hopes of the Mexicans. But Santa Anna exhorted them in eloquent words, and succeeded in raising a new army with which he swore to contest the American advance. Scott and his forces meanwhile advanced by the same route that Cortes had taken over three hundred years before. They encountered Santa Anna's army of 15,000 men at Cerro Gordo, between Vera Cruz and Jalapa, a mountain fastness of great strength. Yet here again Santa Anna was defeated and his army dispersed. Our men occupied Puebla without a shot being fired, and stayed there until August. Santa Anna returned to the capital, where he apparently made every effort to prepare for the final stand. It is on record, however, that during this time he was carrying on a secret correspondence with General Scott in which he intimated that if a million dollars were placed at his disposal, ten thousand of it to be paid at once, he would use every effort to bring about peace. Whether this was a ruse on his part to gain time for his preparations, or whether he really desired to betray his country, has never been discovered. General Scott certainly did not place enough trust in him to delay his preparations for attack.

On the eighth of August Scott's army took up its march towards the capital. In the same month, three hundred and twenty-eight years before, Cortes and his little band had advanced through the same country on a similar errand. Like them, the Americans toiled up

the slopes of the mountains until they saw the fair valley of Mexico spread out before them, its city larger than in Aztec times, but its lakes sadly shrunken in size. As they descended the Sierras, they were halted at times by ditches cut in the road, or huge stones which had been rolled down from the mountains by Santa Anna's orders; but the very same Indians who had made these obstructions were easily persuaded to set to work to remove them. One army was much like another to these humble workers. Scott's men followed the route which led to the City of Mexico south of Lake Chalco. They fought another battle on August 18, at Churubusco, where a fortified convent was strongly defended by the enemy. Here again the Americans were victorious. So great was their elation that a small body of cavalry, under Captain Kearney, pursued the fleeing Mexicans to the very gates of the capital.

Now they were within a few miles from the city. It loomed in front of them, wide-spread and formidable, with numerous works of defense, the chief of which was the great fortress, half castle, half palace, which crowned the Hill of Chapultepec, the pleasure-seat of the Aztec kings and of many of the viceroys. West of this fortress were two strong outposts, the Molino del Rey, or King's Mill, supposed to be a cannon foundry, and Casa Mata, a fortified place containing a large deposit of powder.

After an armistice of some days, which Scott granted

at the request of the Mexicans, and which Santa Anna broke by several hostile actions, the fighting began again. Under a fierce fire from the Mexicans the Americans attacked the King's Mill and Casa Mata and captured both positions. They lost many of their number during these brilliant, but rash engagements. Santa Anna, as usual, would not acknowledge his defeat, but caused the bells of the capital to be rung merrily as if for a victory.

The Mexicans pinned all their faith on the Castle of Chapultepec, which they believed to be impregnable. On the twelfth, the Americans began their bombardment of this stronghold and poured an incessant fire upon it until nightfall, when they slept on their arms, ready to begin again in the morning. At half-past five the next day the bombardment was continued. About eight o'clock the batteries suddenly ceased firing; a division of Americans under General Pillow rushed forward from the conquered Molino del Rey, climbed the steep slopes, raised their scaling ladders and poured over the walls of the castle. Another division under Quitman gained the south-east of the works in spite of the enemy posted outside, while other bodies of American volunteers crossed the meadows in front under heavy fire and entered the outer enclosure of Chapultepec in time to join those from the west. In vain the brave defenders, including eight hundred military cadets, the Mexican West Pointers, tried to withstand

the onslaught of the rash invaders. The Americans swarmed over the breastworks and carried all before them. The cadets, many of them, fought their first and last battle. Men at the guns either fled or were shot down. Officers fell at their posts, and brave old General Bravo, the Revolutionary leader, fighting to the last, was taken prisoner with a thousand others.

The fall of Chapultepec put the final quietus to Mexican hopes of resisting the invaders. Santa Anna and his generals with the remnants of the army evacuated the capital at midnight, retreating to Guadalupe-Hidalgo, three miles away. The Americans entered the city on the following day. General Scott, who, unlike General Taylor, loved fine uniforms and display, rode into the Plaza next day in great glory with his brilliant staff. The Stars and Stripes were hoisted over the National Palace.

Santa Anna, still refusing to perish, as he had promised, did the next best thing in resigning the Presidency in favor of his Constitutional successor, Pena-y-Pena, and disappeared. Some time later, after peace was declared, General Lane, hearing that he was at Tehuacan, near Puebla, sent troopers to capture him. They arrived at his hiding-place to find the nest still warm, but the bird flown! He had left behind his personal effects, which the troopers appropriated, all except his wife's wardrobe, which they chivalrously for-

warded to her. It is said that they played base-ball with his wooden leg!

Still later, Santa Anna, finding his own people unappreciative of his great efforts, wrote to the minister of war for permission to leave the country, and to "seek an asylum on a foreign soil where he might pass his last days in that tranquillity which he could never find in the land of his birth." Neither Mexicans nor Americans desired to stop him, and so it happened that this arch-villain departed unmolested from the country where so many better men than he had met violent deaths. He was not lacking in funds, for he had paid himself very liberally from the Mexican treasury when that was so low that there was scarcely money enough to maintain troops. He retired to Jamaica where we will leave him for a while.

The expedition against Monterey and that which ended in the surrender of the City of Mexico did not include the whole campaign which the United States was making against Mexico. General Stephen Kearney, a hardy Indian fighter, led an army overland to New Mexico, capturing Santa Fé in 1846. An army under General John C. Frémont was sent overland through New Mexico into California, and with the aid of the Pacific fleet of the United States, conquered that province, then only sparsely settled by roving Indians, priests and Mexicans in the small, straggling villages of San Francisco, Los Angeles and other mis-

sions. A wonderful achievement was the march of Colonel Doniphan and his force of Missourians over five thousand miles from the Middle West to Santa Fé, thence to Chihuahua, which they occupied, on to Taylor's camp and then back to the United States. The whole story of this conquering of the West reads like an impossible romance. Such exploits, added to those of the armies which we have already described, of course made the surrender of Mexico inevitable. The treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, by which Mexico ceded to the United States, New Mexico, Texas and California (which territory included also the present states of Arizona, Nevada, Colorado and Utah), in return for $15,000,000 was signed in February, 1848.

She had given away—for the purchase price was comparatively nothing—enough land for an empire. That very year, 1848, gold was discovered in California, as much to the astonishment of the Americans as of the Mexicans. The rush to California began. Over the Rockies and across the desert toiled the "Forty-Niners" in their prairie schooners, carrying to that sleepy coast not only seekers for gold, but Anglo-Saxon energy and brains. Mining towns sprang up in the mountains; the picturesque towers of the missions found themselves surrounded by American cities. The Indians of the New Mexican pueblos were first startled at the shriek of the railway engine, and then dressed themselves in their gayest blankets to sell their baskets

at the stations. Texas sailed serenely on her tide of prosperity, forgetting that she ever owed allegiance to the distracted land on the other side of the Rio Grande.

But the Mexicans do not forget. The old grudge rankles. Is it surprising that the most barbarous element of this childish, undisciplined people at times make "spite-raids" across our territory? Is it surprising that the name "Yankee" stands for a certain reproach?

CHAPTER XVIII

BENITO JUAREZ, THE LITTLE INDIAN

A VERY different sort of man from Santa Anna was next to influence the destinies of Mexico. About the same time that Santa Anna first saw the light of day, a son was born to a poor Indian family living in the State of Oaxaca. The Oaxacans are supposed to be the descendants of the mysterious people who built the great ruins of Mitla; certainly this boy, Benito Juarez, was to show some of the characteristics of a great race. Until he was twelve years old Benito could neither read nor write. Then he found a friend in a well-to-do man, who sent him to school and helped him to study law. Before long the ignorant Indian boy had become a full-fledged lawyer, then a member of the State legislature, then a judge, and then a Member of Congress during the American war. And yet people say that the Mexican Indians have not the power to advance!

From the very first, Juarez was an out-and-out Liberal; that is, opposed to the military and church party, called the Conservatives, who oppressed the Indians.

He knew that the ignorance and poverty of the Indian population was the cause of most of the troubles in Mexico, and that if they had a chance to become educated, prosperous and contented, they would not be the victims of the military leaders, and revolutions would cease.

But at present they were far from ceasing. The war with the United States had not united the country, but left it in confusion worse confounded. One ruler after another tried his hand at calming the troubled waters. Finally the Conservatives succeeded in having Santa Anna recalled from Jamaica and made President for the sixth time. The wooden-legged hero entered the capital in great glory, welcomed by banners and bells, cannons and triumphal arches and flowers. There were plenty of people there who knew him to be a robber and a traitor, but they did not dare to raise their voices while the Conservatives were in power. Santa Anna soon showed that he was the tool of forces who desired to destroy all republican government in the country; and he overreached even his supporters by calmly issuing a decree declaring himself Perpetual Dictator.

At that crowning insolence, the indignation of the Liberals grew too hot to be suppressed. They sprang to arms and their movement to restore democratic ideals gained ground everywhere. In the civil war which followed, Santa Anna's Perpetual Dicatatorship was

rudely overthrown, and Santa Anna obliged to flee the country. He went to Cuba, and then honored the United States by coming to live on Staten Island. Long years after, he returned to the City of Mexico, and died there at the age of eighty, "unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

This successful revolution of the Liberals, sometimes called the Ayotla revolution, because it produced the Plan of Ayotla, was headed by another pure-blooded Indian, Juan Alvarez, who was shortly after made President, and entered Mexico City escorted by a body-guard of natives. Another revolutionist, Comonfort, was made Minister of War, and Benito Juarez Chief Justice. Alvarez soon resigned his position to Comonfort, who thus became President.

The new Liberal government adopted the famous Constitution of 1857, which astonished the world by its provisions for universal liberty. Slavery was abolished—this was four years before the United States freed its slaves—freedom of speech and press guaranteed, religious toleration established and the right of the people to govern firmly upheld. It represented all the ideals for which Mexico had been struggling for forty-seven years, ever since the Cry of Hidalgo, and for which it was still fighting up to a very recent period.

Of course such a Constitution met with great opposition. The Conservatives broke out again in full force, and a terrible war, called "The War of the Re-

form," followed. The chief leaders of the Conservatives were the Generals Zuloaga, Miramon, Tomas Mejia, a full-blooded Indian, and Marquez. Church officials took part in the fighting. "It was a struggle in which the monk appeared, cross in hand, at the head of charging troops; in which the curse of the Church was sounded from a multitude of altars; in which the treasures of centuries were torn from walls and altars, fighting Indian patriots forcing their way into dim, hallowed interiors, gleaming with gold, silver, many-colored jewels . . . painted and sculptured Christs and Madonnas." [1] In this so-called "Holy War" the Church urged its soldiers to the massacre of helpless prisoners. Marquez, one of its favorite generals, was called the "Tiger of Tacubaya," because he executed at Tacubaya, in cold blood, a number of captured Liberal officers and medical students who had been caring for the wounded of both sides. The Liberals, of course, retaliated by murdering their prisoners.

Comonfort became frightened at the tumult he had raised, and resigned the Presidency. Benito Juarez as Justice of the Supreme Court was now legally President, according to the Mexican rule of succession, but had no money to carry on the government. He was obliged to leave the capital, and finally the country. He soon returned, however, and set up his government at Vera Cruz. He had the Indian qualities of pa-

[1] Creelman.

tience and staying power. He would never give up as long as he knew himself to be the true President. Meanwhile the Conservatives got the upper hand, ruled in the capital, and General Miramon twice tried to capture Vera Cruz, but without success.

When the Liberal cause was thus at its lowest ebb, Juarez did a superbly defiant thing; he issued his famous Reform Decrees, which dealt a heavy blow at the Church, his bitterest and most powerful enemy. Though a devout Catholic himself, Juarez knew that the meddling of the Church in politics and the hoarding of the greater part of the wealth of the country in its coffers were bringing about the ruin of Mexico. By his decrees he confiscated all the property of the Church for the use of the nation, and in other ways destroyed the Church's hold on the government.

Though the Church was enraged, the Liberals, or Juarists, as they were now called, received fresh courage from the new laws, and many recruits joined their ranks. Gradually they began to triumph. A battle at Guanajuato gave them a decisive victory, and put an end, for the time being, to the War of the Reform. The "Little Indian" was enabled to move his government from Vera Cruz to the capital. This was on the eleventh of June, 1861. The Mexicans had ended their civil war just before the guns of Fort Sumter announced the beginning of the United States' great conflict.

It looked as if the distracted southern Republic were to enter upon a new era of peace and prosperity; but, alas, the defeated Conservatives had another card up their sleeves. If they could not overthrow the Republic by rebellion at home, they would see what the meddling of European nations could accomplish!

CHAPTER XIX

MAXIMILIAN, MEDDLER AND MARTYR

In a palace by the sea, far away from troubled Mexico, there lived at this time as handsome and romantic a young couple as you could find in many a day's journey. Their names were Maximilian and Carlotta. Maximilian was an Archduke, the brother of Franz-Josef, the Emperor of Austria; Carlotta was the daughter of the former King of Belgium, Leopold I, and sister of the reigning one, Leopold II. Maximilian was thirty, Carlotta twenty-four. They were very much in love with each other, and lived apparently the "happy ever-after" life of some fairy-tale Prince and Princess in their white dream-castle looking out upon the blue Adriatic. He had been, while still a youth, Admiral of the Austrian navy, and later Governor of the Italian territory of Austria. He had retired from these posts, to pass his time in writing books and poems, and in strolling through the shady paths of his grounds at Miramar. He was a tall, blond-bearded, blue-eyed man, handsome and serious. Carlotta, dark-eyed, pretty and spirited, busied herself with many works

of charity. It seems incredible that the Mexican turmoil could touch the lives of this happy, far-away pair. It did so, however. One can imagine Montezuma, leaning from the shadows, to say to Maximilian, "You are young, as I was; rich, as I was; happy, and powerful. Go and take the crown which was stolen from me." Maximilian obeyed; and he paid for the crown in the same way that Montezuma did—with his life!

The Liberals had won the victory in Mexico; and many black-robed priests and Conservatives in league with them had fled to Paris. They had hopes of reviving their lost cause, of recovering the rich lands the Liberals had taken from them, and the power they had abused. No way was too base for them, not even betraying their country into the hands of foreigners.

In Paris these plotters managed to get the ear of the ruler of the French, Napoleon III, who was as much of a schemer as they. He admitted them to his great palace of the Tuileries and soon became interested in their schemes. Napoleon III was a nephew of the great Napoleon, and wished to show himself as much of a man as his uncle. What could prove his ability more plainly than to bring this wonderful land of Mexico, now torn by its dangerous desires for self-government and religious freedom, securely under French control, made over into a monarchy after the European pattern, with Roman Catholic institutions, and a prince of Napoleon's own choosing to govern it?

In this way a foothold would be gained in the New World for all the Latin nations, Mexican riches would flow into French treasuries, a barrier would be raised against the progress of the Anglo-Saxons in America, and much glory be added to his own name.

A pretext was all that was needed to set these plans in motion; and that was soon ready. The Liberal government in Mexico, lacking funds on account of the years of struggle the country had endured, passed a law temporarily suspending payments to its foreign creditors. France took counsel with Spain and England, and they agreed to intervene in Mexico in order to settle their financial claims and protect their citizens. The United States was invited to join, but declined.

In December, 1861, the fleet flying the flags of the three countries entered the Vera Cruz harbor. Troops were landed, and the commissioners, as the representatives were called, went to Orizaba to meet President Juarez and his advisers. Much to the disappointment of the French, the affair went smoothly. A treaty was drawn up which satisfied the Spaniards and English. But France had not come in order to be satisfied. Her commissioners acted in such a way that the others began to suspect there was "a nigger in the woodpile"—that money-claims were not all Napoleon had in mind—and withdrew themselves and their forces. Napoleon now had a clear field.

The French General, Lorencz, had been told by the Mexicans in Paris that the natives would hail him as a deliverer and strew his path with flowers. With this idea in mind he began his march up from the coast. Alas, the flowers mysteriously turned into bullets! The people came out in force to oppose the invaders. The Liberal army hastened towards the scene. But the Conservatives who had planned the invasion had come over with the French and were now busy buying over their own people with French gold. By this means, a considerable army, hostile to President Juarez and friendly to the invaders, was formed, with General Almonte at its head.

On May 5, 1862, a battle took place at Puebla between the defending Mexicans and the invaders. It resulted in the defeat of the latter. General Lorencz, who had thought his task would be so easy, was obliged to retreat in haste to the seacoast. The Mexicans were wild with delight. They had conquered the French, who were themselves the conquerors of the world! To this day the fifth of May, "El Cinquo de Mayo," is a national holiday, the Mexican Fourth of July.

> It is all very well to dissemble your love,
> But why did you kick me downstairs?

Napoleon was no quicker at taking a hint than the hero in this immortal ballad. He was grieved, but not seriously disquieted; at least, not to the point of

withdrawing his troops. He was more than ever determined to intervene, as he called it (he was much too polite to speak of conquest), and force upon the Mexicans the kind of government he thought they ought to have. He accordingly sent over 25,000 more soldiers under General Forey, who announced to the astonished populace that he had come to "free Mexico from the tyrannous demagoguery of Benito Juarez, against whom, and not against the Mexican nation, he was making war." He arirved in Orizaba in October, 1862, but delayed action for several months, and it was March of the next year before he reached Puebla.

This "City of the Angels," the scene of too many non-angelic conflicts, had, since the victory of El Cinquo de Mayo, been even more strongly fortified than before. It was divided into blocks, each of which had to be fought for separately and taken by assault. The French did not flinch at the task, nor the Mexicans shrink from the defense.

"Night and day the battle raged in the streets of Puebla, which were strewed with the dead and dying. The roaring of artillery in the narrow roadways, the crashing of shells, the blaze of rifles, the falling of cannon-smashed walls, the shrieks of the wounded, the fierce shouting of the French and Mexican soldiery as they charged against each other or contested the smoking ruins inch by inch, went on ceaselessly," says the historian, Creelman. Conspicuous in the fighting on

the Liberal side was a young man by the name of Porfirio Diaz.

Finally, when a "ring of fire and steel" was about Puebla, when food and water could not reach the city, and the sufferings of the people had become unbearable, the Mexican guns were dismounted, and the heroic little army surrendered. The French entered the city on the seventeenth of May.

After this, the march to the capital was easy. On the night of the twenty-ninth of May, a forlorn and ragged army passed silently out of the City of Mexico. They were the remnant of the defeated Liberals, the rightful defenders of their country, now forced to flee before the invaders and the traitors among their own people. Escorted by them, the true ruler of Mexico, President Juarez, carrying the State papers, jogged over the rough country roads in the little black coach driven by his faithful Indian coachman, who wept at his master's ill-fortune. With him went his Cabinet. The defeated government found refuge for a while at San Luis Potosi. In the meantime, on the thirtieth of May, the French entered the City of Mexico.

Now the dreams of Napoleon seemed to come true. Flags flew from all the windows and balconies to welcome the French army, cheers greeted them, and only friendly and smiling faces were seen. All the leading people who had opposed the invasion had of course left the city, and the Conservatives, now in power, saw to

it that the lower classes had cause for celebration. In other words, the pulque flowed freely, and with plenty of pulque, a peon does not care who is in power.

General Forey went through the farce of appointing a temporary government, consisting of three Mexican executives and an "assembly of notables," to decide on a permanent form of government for the invaded nation. The "Notables" were of course chiefly notable for being mouthpieces of the French and the Conservatives. They presently announced that Mexico should be a monarchy "under the sovereignty of a prince of the Catholic faith; that this monarch should be known as Emperor of Mexico; that his Royal Highness, Prince Ferdinand Maximilian, Archduke of Austria, should be asked to accept the Imperial Crown for himself and his descendants."

So our story comes back to the young Prince and Princess in their glistening château on the Adriatic Sea. The stage had been set; the cue spoken; it was time for the entrance of the chief actors of the historic tragedy.

Napoleon III had several reasons for choosing Maximilian to carry out his plans in Mexico. First, he was a personal friend, one who had been at many house-parties at the Tuilieries and St. Cloud; second, he came of a family, the Hapsburgs, who were well used to reigning; third, he had, Napoleon thought, just the right blend of dignity and pliability to fit him for the

post. In other words, he would be under Napoleon's thumb, without appearing to be so. So the Emperor judged; but he was wrong.

Some of the intriguing Mexicans in Europe were now sent to Miramar as Napoleon's messengers, to extend to the young Archduke a flattering invitation to come and rule over a country of which he knew next to nothing and with which he had not the faintest natural connection. But that did not matter—the Mexicans were wild to have him; so, at least, the wily spokesman, Gutierrez de Estrada, gave Maximilian to understand.

"We, who are but the feeble interpreters of the hopes and prayers of a whole nation, come to present in that nation's name to your Imperial Highness the crown of the Mexican Empire, which the people offer you, prince, freely and spontaneously, by a solemn decree of the Notables, already ratified by many provinces, and which soon will be, as every one says, by the entire nation." The speaker then handed Maximilian the vote of the Notables engrossed on parchment, and enclosed in a handle of solid gold.

What prince would have been proof against such flattery? Certainly not Maximilian. But, with a scruple that did him credit, he said he would not go unless the vote of the whole Mexican nation called him.

This demand was somewhat of a facer for the Mexican wire-pullers. In the uncivilized condition of

Mexico it would have been impossible to collect a real vote. The authorities therefore did a much more satisfactory thing—for them—they took up a "straw vote" in regions strictly under French control. This they arranged on paper to appear that it included the whole nation and that the Mexicans were in favor of Maximilian by a large majority.

A second deputation waited upon Maximilian at Miramar with the news. By this time it was nearly a year since the French had reached Mexico City and to all appearances gained control of the country. The French army under Bazaine had been busy subduing those incorrigible natives in the outlying districts who still dared to resent the invasion. President Juarez in his little black coach had been forced further and further from his rightful capital—first to San Luis Potosi, then to Saltillo and Monterey. Later on he crossed the desert to Chihuahua, and finally landed at Paso del Norte, just across from the United States border. In the south, the young General Diaz had for a long time managed to hold Oajaca against the Imperials, but finally was forced to surrender.

While these conflicts had been going on in Mexico, other conflicts had been taking place in the mind of the future Emperor. He seems to have had a premonition that all would not be well with him there.

"Must I separate myself from my own beautiful country?" he wrote in his diary at this time. "You

speak to me of a scepter, a palace and power. You set before me a limitless future. Must I accompany you to far shores beyond the great ocean? You desire that the web of my life should be wrought with gold and diamonds. But have you power to give me peace of mind? Do riches confer happiness in your sight? Oh, let me rather pursue my quiet life beside the shadowing myrtle. The study of science and the muse are more pleasing to me than the blaze of gold and diamonds."

Why indeed did he go, we might inquire? Why not stay by his myrtles, since he loved them so much? But the Archduke was perhaps not of such a retiring disposition as his writings implied. With all his picturesque regrets, he was quite convinced of his own importance in the scheme of things. He called himself, in one of his literary productions, "poor fluttering insect of a day"; but in the next sentence he spoke of feeling the pride of "majestic power, God-given," throbbing in his veins. It would be "agreeable," he thought, to stand at the top of some grand marble staircase, and, "glancing downward over all the world, to feel myself the First, like the sun in the firmament." Here spoke the descendant of the Emperor Charles V of Germany and I of Spain—not the trifler with the Muse in shady gardens.

To readers to-day this blue-eyed, poetry-writing archduke may seem pompous and sentimental. A keen-

witted American thought him so then. The American Ambassador at Vienna, John Motley, wrote to Oliver Wendell Holmes:

> There is no glory in the grass nor verdure in anything. In fact, we have nothing green here but the Archduke Maximilian, who firmly believes that he is going forth to Mexico to establish an American empire, and that it is his divine mission to destroy the dragon of democracy and reëstablish the true Church, the right divine, and all sorts of games. Poor young man!

Poor young man indeed!

Carlotta was even more anxious for imperial honors than her husband, and she urged him to take the final step. The second party of deputies found the couple, gorgeously dressed, standing in state in the reception hall, in the midst of their attendants, ladies of honor, and nobles. It was a beautiful day in April, 1864. Upon receiving a copy of the vote, Maximilian accepted in gracious words, and took the oath of office. The Mexican flag was run up over Miramar, the Austrian ships in the harbor thundered salutes, and the delegates who had betrayed their country to foreigners were moved to tears by the solemnity of the occasion.

Maximilian went to Rome to obtain the Pope's benediction, and soon after, he and Carlotta set sail for the New World. On the voyage, they amused themselves by inventing rules of etiquette for their imperial house-

holds, choosing uniforms for their bodyguard, designing decorations and medals. They were like two children playing at being king and queen, rather than serious rulers of a distracted country.

Their arrival at Vera Cruz was very disappointing. Not only did a heavy rain cast a damper on their spirits, but the deputation sent from the capital to welcome them had not arrived. They entered the port as ordinary citizens, without creating the least excitement. Soon, however, the official welcomers arrived, and the party took carriages for Orizaba. The roads were washed out with rain; a broken axle nearly landed Maximilian and Carlotta in the ditch. But they reached Orizaba safely, and there the scene changed. The rain had stopped, and the Indians, rendered enthusiastic by the Conservatives in the well-known way, turned out to welcome the royal party with flowers and smiles. From Orizaba to the capital their journey appeared to be a triumphant progress. They entered the City of Mexico in a blaze of glory: the hot June sun, the flags, the streets and balconies crowded with hurrahing people, recalled the entrance of Cortes at the time of Aztec splendor.

Sara Yorke Stevenson, an American girl who was there and has written an interesting book on Maximilian, tells us that as the tall, fair, beautiful couple, graciously smiling and bowing, passed through the ranks of their small, brown, ragged subjects, most of the spec-

tators could not help thinking that the legend of the Fair God had come true at last.

Maximilian and Carlotta were enthroned with great splendor in the Cathedral of Mexico, and presently went to live in Chapultepec Castle, the pleasure palace of the Aztec kings, now remodeled in an expensive manner to suit the latest occupants. There they held an elaborate court, modeled after that of Austria. They ate their meals from plates of solid silver and gold, costing a round million of dollars. They rode in a state coach made, like Cinderella's, of glass, and heavily gilded. It was unlike Cinderella's in costing $47,000 from the State treasury, instead of merely the wave of a fairy wand. To-day this coach may be seen in the National Museum of Mexico, alongside of President Juarez' shabby little black carriage.

It is said that $5000 in Mexican gold was handed on a gilt plate to Maximilian every morning for pocket money, and about $500 given to Carlotta in the same way. Besides this, Maximilian spent huge sums on all kinds of foolish luxuries for himself and the court. The debts incurred in Paris and London at this time have formed a heavy drain on Mexican resources ever since.

Of course the society people and the tradespeople in the City of Mexico benefited for the time by all the French money spent there. Such people, and others too ignorant to know better, approved of the new

régime. The French brought an air of gayety and elegance to the always attractive capital. Their officers soon learned how to make love to the pretty senoritas by "playing the bear," Mexican fashion; that is, riding up and down in front of the window, casting longing glances at the loved one, or riding behind her carriage in the Paseo. They made up a French word for this kind of courtship; "noviotage," from "novio," betrothed lover. With the Mexicans, it ends finally in marriage; with the French, it did not have time to, so short was their stay.

Maximilian spent the summer in traveling about his empire. Upon his return, instead of pondering the serious affairs of empire, he wasted his time settling trivial points of etiquette in his court. In place of drawing the strongest men he could find about him, he appointed to the most important posts incompetent foreigners who knew nothing of the country. He had a wild idea of conciliating his opponents, the Liberals, most of whom would not be conciliated on any terms; but in the vain attempt to win them over, he neglected and offended the French and Mexicans who had brought him there. He opposed Napoleon's plans for the development of the country, and introduced impracticable projects of his own. He hindered General Bazaine's actions, and disapproved of his attempts to create a national army. Carlotta, his "better half," tried to

help him, but was given to understand very plainly that she must not meddle in affairs of state.

One of Maximilian's pet plans was a Department of the Navy. As the Mexican government did not even own a canoe, much less a battleship, this created much merriment, Sara Yorke Stevenson tells us. Captain Destroyat, a French naval officer, was made Secretary of the Navy. He lived on a street which was often flooded in rainy weather. One morning after a heavy downpour some of his friends set sail to a tiny fleet of toy ships, which, bravely flying the Mexican flag, tacked as toy ships will and came to an anchor just at his door. It was his Mexican navy! The officer enjoyed the joke, but Maximilian, who heard of it, was much offended.

Far away, in the mountains of Chihuahua, the stolid Indian, Benito Juarez, with only his faithful Secretary of State, Lerdo de Tejada, to keep him company, watched and waited. His army was melting away, he had no money, his claims were ignored by most of the civilized nations, and yet he did not give up, for he knew that he was the real ruler of Mexico, and that this "Emperor" was only an impostor—an innocent one, perhaps, but an impostor none the less.

When Maximilian had been in Mexico but a few months, Napoleon showed that he was becoming tired of his bargain. "I think," he wrote to General Bazaine in August, "that the Emperor should show more

decision." He knew Maximilian was not strong enough to stand alone.

To tell the truth, Napoleon's scheme was meeting with opposition both at home and abroad. "One can do anything with bayonets but sit upon them," remarked "Plon-Plon," Prince Napoleon, the Emperor's brother. He meant that Maximilian's throne, which depended entirely upon the bayonets of the French army, was not a safe or a comfortable resting-place. The French had thought at first that the majority of Mexicans would be pleased with the new régime. Instead, they heard news of uprisings, of martial law, burned villages, and wholesale execution of the natives. The French asked themselves what was the use of all this, especially as they saw nothing of the far-famed Mexican riches, but instead had continually to lend the country large sums of money.

But even more disturbing to Napoleon than the complaints of his own Chamber of Deputies was the remonstrance of a foreign power—the United States.

Only the strain and stress of the Civil War had kept Uncle Sam from voicing his sentiments about the Mexican tangle some years before. Napoleon knew this, and probably never would have invaded Mexico if he had not thought the United States in no position to interfere. It was absolutely against the Monroe doctrine that foreigners should meddle in this way with the affairs of the American continent, and now that

the war was over, and even before it was over, the United States expressed its resentment in no unmistakable terms. About a month before Maximilian's arrival, our Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, forwarded to our ambassador in France a copy of a resolution passed by our House of Representatives expressing its unanimous opposition to any recognition of a monarchy in Mexico. Upon Maximilian's arrival, our Ambassador in Mexico, the Hon. Thomas Corwin, left the country.

After the defeat of the Southern Confederacy, the United States was in a position to back up its requests with a splendid army of veterans. It insisted upon the withdrawal at once of the French troops from the continent of North America. In 1866 General Sheridan began massing his troops on the Mexican border. The Liberals took courage and rallied to their standards. Napoleon was forced to send orders to General Bazaine to draw his troops in toward the capital. This was the first move of the final complete retreat. As the French troops fell back, the Liberals advanced towards the capital from north and south.

We are getting a year ahead of our story. In October, 1865, Maximilian, still under the delusion that his empire was successful, and hearing that Juarez had crossed over to the United States, took it into his head to consider the Revolution at an end, and issued a foolish and cruel decree, permitting all armed Republicans

to be taken as outlaws, tried by court martial, and shot within twenty-four hours. In other words, this decree legalized the murder of prisoners whose only crime had been fighting for their country. It was called "El Bando Negro," the "Black Decree," and raised a storm of indignation in the United States as well as in Mexico.

By this time Napoleon was in the shadow of war at home, and could no longer spare a single soldier for Mexico. In the winter of 1866, he sent Baron Saillard to Mexico to warn Maximilian that he must prepare for a gradual withdrawal of French forces. Maximilian paid no attention. In May Napoleon sent another still more decisive letter. In this, he went back on the agreement made when Maximilian accepted the throne, by which French armies were to be kept in Mexico for six years, and said that the last detachment of the French army must be out of the country by November 1, 1867. He told Maximilian that he must expect no more French money, but must instead give the French one-half of the revenues from the customs at Tampico and Vera Cruz.

Maximilian unwillingly agreed to this violation of the treaty, not apparently realizing what it would mean. He was like a sleeper whom nothing short of an earthquake would arouse. The earthquake had not yet come. Maximilian, only faintly aware of the distant rumblings, went on with his dream of empire.

In a few months it became evident, even to him, that things were going wrong. The Liberal armies were growing larger and larger, and coming nearer and nearer. The French soldiers were preparing to leave. None were left to defend Maximilian's throne but his Imperial legion, which consisted of French volunteers, Belgians, Austrians, and renegade Mexicans. There was no money in the Imperial treasury to pay them, and they were fast turning into brigands, who robbed the people right and left. Maximilian's brother, Franz-Josef, Emperor of Austria, wished to send him troops, but was prevented by the United States. At last it began to dawn upon the Emperor that his Empire was melting away. Should he abdicate before it was too late?

As usual in all crises of his life, he hesitated. And while he was hesitating, his "better half" took matters into her own hands. Pretty, proud Carlotta, king's daughter and sister, Empress on her own account, could not believe that Napoleon would really let her husband lose his throne. Womanlike, she was sure she could accomplish everything by a personal interview. She told her husband that she herself would go to Europe and persuade Napoleon to think better of his conduct. On July 13, 1866, she set sail from Vera Cruz, accompanied only by a lady-in-waiting, Madame Del Barrio.

Before they reached France, Madame Del Barrio

tells us that the poor Empress was in a state of great nervous excitement. This increased when she found no one to welcome her at their landing-place of Brest, nor at Paris. She trembled from head to foot when she stepped into the hired carriage that took them to their hotel. For twenty-four hours Napoleon ignored her, but on the second day one of the Empress Eugénie's chamberlains came with a note from him asking Carlotta to tea at the summer palace of St. Cloud.

Carlotta went. She had an interview with Napoleon and Eugénie which lasted an hour or longer. Suddenly Madame Del Barrio, who was waiting outside, heard her cry in agonized tones,

"Indeed I should have known who you are and who I am! I should not have dishonored the blood of the Bourbons in my veins by humbling myself before a Bonaparte, who is nothing but an adventurer!" There was the sound of a fall. Madame Del Barrio rushed into the room to find Carlotta lying on the floor, while the Empress Eugénie, much distressed, bent over her and tried to revive her. Napoleon had brought on the fainting fit by telling Carlotta that he could do nothing more for her husband.

The Empress of France put a cup of water to the lips of the unfortunate Empress of Mexico. Carlotta, reviving, dashed it away, crying that Eugénie was trying to poison her.

As soon as Carlotta was able, she hastened to Rome

to see the Pope, Pius IX. With a wild disregard of etiquette, she rushed past the chamberlains at the Vatican, and into the Pope's presence. Her face was haggard, her eyes wild. She threw a handful of chestnuts on the table in front of the astonished Holy Father.

"These, with water from a fountain, are all I have had to eat and drink for twenty-four hours," she exclaimed. "Napoleon's agents are trying to poison me!"

The Pope did not realize at first that the Empress's mind was affected by her troubles. He ordered food to be brought, and she ate ravenously. But soon it became apparent that she was insane. She insisted that every one was trying to poison her, and would eat nothing but eggs laid in her presence by hens kept in her hotel suite! She haunted the Vatican every day. Presently her family took her away, raving mad, and shut her up in a Belgian castle, where she is still living. She never again saw her husband. She never knew the fate that befell him!

To Maximilian one day in October came the terrible news about Carlotta. He was overcome. Further resistance did not seem worth while, and very early on the morning of October 21, 1866, he left Mexico City, intending to go to Vera Cruz and take the Austrian man-of-war that was waiting there to convey him to Europe. He had gone no further than Orizaba when he made one of his fatal changes of mind.

In some mysterious way a mysterious German priest

called the Abbé Fischer had gained an influence over the mind of Maximilian. The Emperor, during the first part of his reign, had tried to break away from the High Church party, who were chiefly responsible for bringing him over. He had offended the Pope deeply by not taking any steps to recover the lands of the clergy. He had sent into exile two notorious High Church generals, Miramon and Marquez, who had led the High Church forces in the late wars. He had done everything he could to win over the Liberals to his side. But now the Liberals were all against him once more, and the Abbé Fischer, his bad angel, was whispering to him to join forces again with the Church and the Conservatives. He persuaded the Emperor not to abdicate, not to leave the country, but to stay and fight. Maximilian consented.

"Maximilian has got him a horse and is off to conquer an empire!" said Marshal Niel, one of Napoleon's generals, when he heard of this decision.

Greatly rejoicing, Generals Marquez and Miramon landed once more in Mexico, and offered their swords to the cause. It was arranged that they should join with a native general, Thomas Mejia, in a campaign against the Liberals. On December 1, 1866, Maximilian issued a proclamation to the Mexican nation, declaring that he would remain at his post till the end. On the twelfth, he went back to Mexico City.

Soon after, the French army left the capital. They

passed a great building where all the windows were curtained, and not a face was visible. It was the National Palace. At a window, well hidden by the curtains, a tall, bearded man watched the last soldier pass out of sight. It was Maximilian.

"At last," he exclaimed, turning to his secretary, "I am free!"

He was as free as a man in a cage of tigers with the door locked from the outside!

One of Maximilian's first acts was to issue orders to his generals to grant no quarter to prisoners at arms, and to sentence the chief men of the Liberals, including the President, to be shot, if captured! This order fell into the hands of Juarez and did not help matters when Maximilian came to be judged.

The Republican generals Corona and Escobeda were advancing from the north towards the capital, while the brilliant, fearless Diaz was preparing to capture Puebla and then march towards Mexico City. Maximilian was in a trap. His Cabinet advised him to put himself as commander-in-chief at the head of his forces, and collect his army at Queretaro, where they might put a stop to Corona's and Escobeda's advance. Maximilian did so. He had about 10,000 men at Queretaro. General Miramon, the more capable of his two generals, wished to attack the Republican forces at once, before they combined and surrounded the city. General Marquez objected, and Maximilian sided with

him. Several days passed in indecision, and meanwhile the Republicans were coming nearer. Soon they had invested the town, and it was too late to strike. General Marquez then took all the available cavalry and left for the capital. His retreat, of course, was a bad thing for the defense. His excuse was, that he would bring back reinforcements within twenty days; but the weeks passed and he did not return. He was profitably occupied in robbing the inhabitants of the City of Mexico of everything they possessed. At last the inhabitants turned upon the "Leopard," as he was called, and it is said that he only escaped by hiding himself in a new-made grave. He found his way to Cuba, where he lived for twenty-seven years before he dared come back to Mexico. So much for one of Maximilian's principal defenders.

The siege at Queretaro lasted for two months, without the Imperial forces accomplishing anything in particular. But some of Maximilian's best qualities now came to the front, and he won all hearts by his kindness and courage. He shared the hardships of the siege, and was reckless in exposing himself to fire, his tall figure making him a conspicuous mark. He did not appear to realize how serious affairs were, and spent much time conferring decorations and honors on his favorites. One of these was his aide-de-camp, Prince Salm-Salm, an Austrian who had married a very attractive American girl. He had fought on the

Union side in the United States and had now come to help put down what he considered the rebellion in Mexico. His wife was looked down upon by the conventional ladies in Mexican society because she took the field with her husband, like a *soldadera,* or woman camp-follower, mounted on a big steed and dressed in a uniform of blue and silver. She and her husband were the most loyal friends poor Maximilian ever made, and did everything to help him in his tragedy.

By the night of the fourteenth of May, even the Emperor knew that things were almost hopeless. As a last resort, he and Miramon planned to cut their way out of the city. On the night before the expected sortie, the Emperor and his staff retired as usual in their headquarters in the convent of La Cruz. A young lieutenant of artillery, named Haus, and his men, guarded the gate to the convent garden. Suddenly one of Maximilian's most trusted officers, Colonel Lopez, appeared at the gate, followed by a body of soldiers.

"These are a reinforcement of artillery," he told Haus. "Arouse your artillerymen, have this gun taken out of its embrasure, and turned obliquely to the left, quickly."

Haus thought the order a strange one, but, since his colonel gave it, he had to obey. The gun was turned aside and the strange soldiers entered. Haus stopped to pick up his sword and zarape, which he had left on the ground behind him. They were gone. He turned

to the officer in charge of the strange soldiers, to ask him what had become of the missing articles, and saw that he also was a stranger.

"Who are you?" he asked.

The officer replied that he was one of the brigade of General Mendez, an Imperial general.

Haus knew all the officers in this brigade, and knew that this man was not one of them. Moreover, there seemed an unusual stir and confusion. His suspicions were aroused. Again he asked the officer who he was, and received another and quite unsatisfactory answer.

"Amid so many falsehoods, I suspect treason!" Haus exclaimed.

"Have no fear, senor," the strange officer replied, after a moment's hesitation. "You are in the hands of the regular army. We are not guerilleros; we belong to the battalion of the *supremos poderes* of the republic."

"What? We are in the hands of the enemy? But how was it that Colonel Lopez let you in? He must be a traitor."

An old sergeant who was standing by said sadly,

"Are you only now finding this out?"

Meanwhile enemy troops quietly filled the convent, taking the places of the Imperials. When Maximilian awoke, not one of his guard was in his apartments. Rushing out with his minister and secretary to see what had happened, he found himself face to face with the

Liberal officer in command, who, in order to save Maximilian's life, pretended not to recognize him and let him pass into the town. In the plaza Maximilian and his officers, Miramon and Mejia, tried to collect their scattered forces, but the army had deserted, almost in a body. Lopez, the traitor, not yet known as such to Maximilian, joined him. He begged Maximilian to hide in a certain house. "I do not hide," exclaimed the Emperor proudly. He also refused the horse that Lopez offered him that he might escape. A flag of truce was sent to the Republican camp, and Maximilian surrendered his sword to Colonel Echegaray. He was taken back to his old quarters in La Cruz convent. The Liberal officers came to call on him and spoke contemputuously of Lopez, who had betrayed him. "Such men are used, then kicked," said one.

Maximilian was slow, as usual, to realize his danger. He was told that he must stand trial for his life. He tried to put them off with a childish excuse. He was no longer Emperor of Mexico, he said, but only an Archduke of Austria, entitled to safe passage to Europe. This was because he had signed an act of abdication a month before. As he had kept the act secret at the time he signed it, had particularly drawn it up to take effect only when he should be killed or captured, and had meanwhile gone on issuing imperial decrees right and left, it was about as much good as an accident insurance policy drawn after the accident.

President Juarez, the dogged Indian who had at last come into his own, ordered the court-martial to proceed. Maximilian, Miramon and Mejia were tried. In twenty-four hours the verdict was returned—death!

In Maximilian's case it was because: He had invaded the country without right or claim; he had called in foreigners to assist him in unjust warfare; he had overthrown the Constitution and the institutions of the country; he had destroyed the lives and property of Mexicans; and (the Black Decree come home to roost!) he had barbarously decreed the murder of Mexicans who were defending their country.

The Queen of England, Napoleon of France, the Emperor of Austria, the condemned man's brother, and the United States government, all sent messages to Juarez, begging him to spare the royal culprit. Princess Salm-Salm, after several daring but unsuccessful attempts to effect the ex-Emperor's escape from the convent, herself went to Juarez and fell on her knees, asking him to pardon Maximilian. Juarez replied:

"I am grieved, madam, to see you thus on your knees before me; but if all the kings and queens of Europe were in your place, I could not spare his life. It is not I who take it, it is the people and the law, and if I should not do its will the people would take it and mine also."

From the moment that Maximilian received the sentence the tawdriness and triviality dropped from him,

and he became, in reality, what he had been before only in pretense, a hero. He quietly made ready for death, dictating letters, arranging his affairs down to the last detail, and spending much time with a priest, who administered the last sacraments. This priest was not Father Fischer, who had long since fled.

A night or two before the time set for execution Maximilian sent a telegram to Juarez, asking him to spare the lives of his generals Miramon and Mejia. It is said that Juarez offered Mejia his pardon, but the loyal little general refused it.

Shortly before the end, Maximilian wrote the following letter to Carlotta:

My Beloved Carlotta: If some day you are permitted by God to be restored, you will hear of the increasing misfortune which has followed me since you departed for Europe. You carried my soul away with you. My hopes have been shattered by so many unexpected strokes that death is a joyous release rather than an agony. I go down gloriously as a soldier and as a king, defeated but not dishonored. If your suffering be such that God may summon you to be with me, I will bless the divine hand which has been laid so heavily upon us. Farewell. Farewell.

Your unhappy Maximilian.

A short time before his execution Maximilian was informed that Carlotta was dead. "It is well," said he. "There is one tie less to bind me to the world."

Shortly after daybreak of June 19, a carriage procession made its way to the Hill of the Bells, on the

outskirts of Queretaro. Four thousand soldiers of the Republic and a great crowd of citizens were gathered there, waiting for the event that was to make this a Mexican holiday. Near a low adobe wall an officer and seven soldiers with rifles also waited.

The carriage arrived. Two Mexicans in blue and silver uniform, a priest, and a tall European in a frock coat alighted. The priest seemed about to faint, and the European held smelling-salts to his nostrils. "What a beautiful day!" he said, as he breathed the fresh morning air. "On such a one I have always wished to die!" As the three condemned advanced towards the wall, the tall man said to one of the generals,

"A brave soldier, General Miramon, should be honored even in his last hour; permit me to give you the place of honor." To Mejia, "General, what has not been rewarded on earth, will be in Heaven."

The speaker then distributed gold among the soldiers in the small squad, and asked them to aim carefully at his heart, not at his face, that his mother, to whom his body would be sent, might recognize him. He requested of the officer that his eyes might be left unbandaged. Then, turning to the crowd, Maximilian, one-time ruler of Mexico, made his last speech to his former subjects:

"Mexicans! May my blood be the last to be spilled for the welfare of the country; and if it should be

necessary that its sons should still shed theirs, may it flow for its good, but never by treason. Long live independence! Long live Mexico!"

The speaker laid his hand on his breast, drew himself up to his full height, and looked straight in front of him. A volley of shots rang out on the still air; five passed through Maximilian's body. The Emperor and the Empire were dead!

CHAPTER XX

DIAZ—THE DESPOT

The mountain state of Oaxaca, ancient dwelling place of the race which built the superb tombs of Mitla, has produced two strong men of modern times: Benito Juarez, the great Liberal President, and Porfirio Diaz, often called the Maker of modern Mexico.

When, in a whirlwind of conspiracies and revolutions, Santa Anna reëntered Mexico after the war with the United States and was made Supreme Dictator, he decided to have a farcical sort of election, all the polls being guarded by his soldiers. Porfirio Diaz, the son of a Spanish inn-keeper and half-breed Mixtec woman, was then a young lawyer—he had studied law under Juarez—and a professor in the Institute of Law at Oaxaca. He was a thin, erect young man, with something of a military bearing, dark hair which stood up straight from his well-shaped forehead, and large, dark eyes of a peculiar intensity and brilliance. Though most of his life had been spent in hard study, he had had some military experience of the "Boy Scout" order, when he and other juniors had organized a brigade

to protect the city of Oaxaca during the war with the United States.

Santa Anna's voting day came. There were shotted cannon at each of the four corners of Oaxaca's public square, and soldiers with set bayonets guarded all the streets. The professors of the Institute were to vote in a body. Though Liberals, they saw the necessity of voting for the Dictator—that is, all but one. He refused, says James Creelman, Diaz' biographer, to cast a vote. One of the professors asked him the reason.

"No one need vote unless he chooses," replied young Diaz.

"Yes," replied the professor with a sneer. "One does not vote when he is afraid."

Diaz instantly seized the pen and wrote down his vote for General Alvarez, who was then leading the revolution against Santa Anna in the south. The next moment he had disappeared. He knew well that his life was in danger, and before the police could catch him he had escaped through the city gates, in company with a well-known bandit, and was in hiding in the mountains.

Before a year had passed the wheel of government had turned once more, the Liberals were on top and Santa Anna ousted. General Alvarez was made President, Juarez a Cabinet Minister, and young Diaz was sub-prefect, or mayor, of Iztlan, a mountain district.

The Indians of Iztlan were thought to be very cow-

ardly. Diaz got a number of them together, stood them in a line, then threw off his jacket and went through a series of setting-up exercises which showed his powerful muscles. He told the Indians that he had once been a thin, weak boy with a flat chest, but that he had developed himself by these exercises and that they could do the same. The Indians consented to be drilled, first in the athletic exercises, then in military methods, and before long formed a fine body of soldiers. They were to fight for Diaz in many battles.

Throughout the War of the Reform, Porfirio Diaz, as has already been seen, was an active fighter on the Liberal side. For two years, in spite of an unhealed wound in his side received in his first battle, he harassed the Conservatives in the mountain regions of Oaxaca. "No Indian of the surrounding jungles was more swift of movement or keen of eye. He could walk or run or crawl or climb with the most desperate of the forest-bred. He could trail an enemy without sleep or food. He seemed to see in the dark. His Indian soldiers followed him into the most dangerous situations without question, for their broad-shouldered, restless, tireless leader seemed to have 'second sight' and a charmed life." [1]

When the Liberals contested Maximilian's empire, one of the youngest but most brilliant generals in the fighting against the French was Porfirio Diaz. In the

[1] Creelman.

battle of the fifth of May at Puebla, in which the French were beaten, he was in command of a part of the front and pursued the enemy for a long distance. When the French attacked Puebla again a year later, Diaz commanded a brigade of the defense with great bravery and skill. But the city had to surrender, and Diaz and the other officers were taken prisoner. The next day they were to be sent to Vera Cruz on their way to French fortresses. That very night Diaz, wrapping himself in his serape, managed to escape under the nose of the officer of the guard and made his way on foot to the City of Mexico.

When Juarez had to abandon the capital and retreat before the victorious French, Diaz received command of the main body of the Mexican army. He skillfully retreated with it to Oaxaca, through a vast territory already entered by the enemy's forces. He held out there a long time, but at last General Bazaine with more than ten thousand picked men marched against him in person, and Diaz, after a month and a half's siege with only twenty-eight hundred men, was forced to surrender.

He was taken back to Puebla as a prisoner, closely guarded, and shut up in the strong convent of Santa Catarina. Every night here for five months he worked at boring a hole in the solid cement floor under his bed, through which he hoped to reach the street. Before he had finished his labor he was moved to another con-

vent. Instead of being discouraged he began all over again his plans for escape. He managed to communicate with friends outside who stood ready to receive him. On the night of the twentieth of September, 1865, he managed to escape over the roofs and by means of ropes to the street, and gained the house of friends, who furnished him with horses, a servant, and guide. Soon the daring adventurer was racing towards the mountains of Oaxaca, where his devoted mountaineers quickly gathered around his standard.

The day of the French in Mexico was drawing to a close. Diaz came thundering up from the south while Juarez was returning towards his rightful capital and Maximilian was making his last stand at Queretaro. And soon the dashing young general with his devoted troops was once more in front of Puebla, from which he had fled by night a year and a half before. Four years ago the French troops had been unable to take this strongly protected city until the garrison had been starved into surrender. Diaz began the attack from fourteen different points at once and in a few hours entered the city in triumph.

Within twenty-four hours after this victory, he met Marquez on the road from Mexico and defeated him and his army. Marquez fled back to Mexico. Diaz with his army moved up towards the city, and began a siege. At the end of seventy days, Mexico capitulated. It is said that the first act of the victorious

general was to order all the army bakers to stay up all night baking bread for the starving garrison and population.

Soon after this, Juarez was re-elected President and Diaz returned to Oaxaca. He had won great fame and his honor was as bright as his sword.

With the Liberals triumphant and the honest Little Indian once more President, it seemed as if Mexico might have been happy; but such was not the case. Murmurs were heard against Juarez. These came especially from the Liberals who had served in the army and had been dismissed, too hastily, they thought, at the end of the war. One of the most prominent and discontented ex-army officers was Porfirio Diaz.

When Juarez came up for re-election in 1871, he found opponents of his own party arrayed against him: Lerdo de Tejada, his former minister; Porfirio Diaz, his former pupil, supporter and friend.

Juarez won the election. At once there were armed uprisings all over the country. Diaz issued the "Plan of La Noria" denouncing the government. Fighting went on for about a year, and then one morning in July, 1872, solemnly tolled bells in Mexico City proclaimed to the people that their President had died suddenly during the night from heart failure.

Though Juarez was the first Mexican President to die in office, he had given his life to his people more truly than most of the sword-flourishing, so-called patri-

ots. He had served the best interests of his country single-heartedly, and he died simple, honest, and poor, as he had lived. In him the Indians lost one of the best friends they ever had.

Lerdo de Tejado, who was Justice of the Supreme Court, succeeded legally to the Presidency, and Diaz retired and made a pretense of farming. But plots were seething in his ambitious brain, and one day he disappeared. Soon after, General Hernandez, one of his friends, announced a new "plan." Diaz reappeared in the north as if by magic. He had been organizing a revolution in Texas. From Sonora to Yucatan the "Porfiristas" sprang to arms. But luck was against Diaz this time. The government troops were strong, and the revolutionists met with little success. Their leader fled from the country.

The mail steamer, *City of Havana,* sailing from New York not long after, had among its passengers a quiet, inoffensive man registered as a Cuban physician returning to Havana. He wore smoked glasses, and, as some of the passengers observed, a wig. Aside from these peculiarities, he attracted little attention till the steamer touched at Tampico, where a number of Mexican officers and soldiers boarded her. One of the officers stared rudely at the Cuban physician, and called the others' attention to him. The physician looked annoyed, and slipped away.

Later in the afternoon, just as it was growing dusk,

while the *City of Havana* was still anchored four miles outside Tampico, there was heard a splash and a cry of "Man overboard!" The ship's crew lowered a boat at once, taking in it some of the Mexican officers, who seemed desirous to help in the rescue.

The man in the water did not wish to be rescued. The waning light showed him swimming madly for shore. As the boat drew near he turned and circled and finally dived as if to elude them. But the pursuit kept up, and at last the swimmer was dragged, half-drowned, into the boat. His wig was off, his glasses were gone, and the straight, bristling hair, the dark, brilliant eyes and strong features of Porfirio Diaz were plainly recognizable.

He was in the hands of his enemies, the government officers and troops. They could do nothing to him on board the American vessel, but as soon as they reached Vera Cruz a firing squad and a stone wall were waiting.

Diaz was taken back to the ship, and closely watched. But through the help of the American purser, who threw a life-preserver overboard to distract the attention of the Mexicans, who thought it was Diaz overboard again, he managed to give them the slip and hide in a small clothes-press in the purser's room. The Mexicans searched the ship, and not finding him, concluded he was again risking death from sharks and drowning. Much disgusted, they gathered in the purser's room

to divert their minds over a game of cards. They were so close to Diaz that he feared they would hear his breathing. He was not discovered, however, and stayed in this uncomfortable retreat for three days, fed by the purser. When the ship reached Vera Cruz he was helped to escape by some of the sailors, who rowed him to a spot on the shore where a man was waiting with horses. Diaz leaped into the saddle and made straight for Oaxaca. Richmond was in the field again!

From that time on the revolution of Diaz was plain sailing. Lerdo, the President, was obliged to flee a few days before the legal expiration of his term, and Porfirio Diaz entered the capital in triumph on November 23, 1876. He was welcomed enthusiastically, being popular with the army and a great part of the people. In the new election, with his soldiers guarding all the polls, he received, strange to say, the majority of votes! And so, in typical Mexican fashion, Porfirio Diaz became the legal ruler of the country.

Whatever we may think of the way in which Diaz gained the Presidential chair, we must acknowledge that he made a strong ruler. The main features of his policy were these: to put down disorder and clear the way for a peaceful development of Mexico and its resources; and to induce foreign capital and foreign enterprise to help open up the country. He carried out both these aims to the last letter.

When Diaz was first made President, the country was swarming with brigands, many of them soldiers and officers of the disbanded Liberal army. Whole villages were seized by the bandits and loans forced from them. The stage coach running between the capital and Puebla was sometimes robbed four times on a single journey, the passengers being stripped even of the clothes they wore. (Some taking this trip thoughtfully provided themselves with newspapers in case of such emergency!) During the Empire, Marshal Bazaine, in command of the City of Mexico, once ordered a number of Zouaves to dress in women's gowns with wide hoop skirts according to the fashion of the times, and take seats inside the stage. The gay coach-load had not traveled four blocks from the center of the city when it was attacked by robbers. A fusillade poured out of its windows by the supposed ladies gave the robbers the shock of their lives!

Diaz realized that many of the bandits had taken to this life because they had no way of earning an honest living. Accordingly, he offered them positions in his newly organized body of *rurales,* or national mounted police. In picturesque uniform of tight-fitting gray cloth, with flaming red neckties and wide sombreros, armed to the teeth and mounted on splendid horses, the ex-bandits patrolled all the roads. Woe to the unreformed comrade plying his trade who crossed their path! The wisdom of setting a thief to catch a thief

was never proved more thoroughly than by Porfirio Diaz. In a short time brigandage entirely disappeared, and travelers could go all over Mexico with safety.

Every now and then rebellions cropped up, but they were promptly nipped in the bud. Diaz was a military man above all things. The army adored him (he paid their salaries promptly); the rural police were at his service; thus he had a better control of the country than previous rulers. He had been First in War—he desired to remain First in Peace—and if he was not First in the Hearts of his countrymen, there were very few who dared admit it. The practice of standing dissatisfied persons up against a wall and shooting them at sunrise, and the other one of drafting them into the army to serve in some unhealthful locality, had much to do with keeping the country quiet.

At the end of his first term in 1880, Diaz stepped aside in favor of his friend, General Manual Gonzalez. He had to do this because he had put himself on record as favoring a "one-term" Presidency. This was his excuse for opposing Juarez. When Gonzalez' four years were up, however, Diaz was elected President again and remained in the office without a break till the year 1910. This is the longest term of office held by any President in the world. How he accomplished it will be seen later.

Diaz governed well in a financial way. When he succeeded Gonzalez the finances of Mexico were at the

lowest ebb. The country had no credit at home or abroad. Diaz, with the help of his able Minister of Finance, Limantour, managed so that debts were paid as they became due and a large national capital accumulated. This was partly through economy in the administration of the government, and partly through the increased revenues due to the growth of Mexican commerce and industries.

When Diaz first came to the Presidency, there was but one short railroad in the country—the one which connected Vera Cruz with the capital. Before he ended there were more than ten thousand miles of railroad. The country was opened up from ocean to ocean, and from the United States to Yucatan. Most of these were built by United States capital. Trolley lines and electric lights, telephones and telegraphs, improved street cleaning and water systems, made the larger Mexican cities as comfortable to live in as American ones, and incidentally made money for the foreigners who installed them. The pueblos of the Indians, however, remained just as primitive and probably more unsanitary than in Aztec times.

Great engineering works, also accomplished by foreigners, improved the harbors on both coasts. Cotton mills, tobacco factories, sugar refineries, sprang up as if by magic. Before Diaz, mining rights in Mexico had been difficult for foreigners to obtain. He made them easy. He allowed foreigners to acquire control

of the great plantations in coffee, rice, sugar, cocoa and other products, which were worked by cheap native labor. When lands which he desired to sell were held in small lots by the Indians, having been passed from father to son ever since Aztec times, he took a clever way to dispossess them. In the year 1894, notices were posted requiring landowners to appear on a certain day before a certain official and swear to their claims. Most of the peons could neither read nor write, thanks to the priests who were supposed to educate them, so of course they paid no attention to the notice. Thereby they lost their title to their lands, which were taken from them, and sold by the government. The peons were forced then to labor on the plantations or in the mines, where they were paid such small wages that they at once fell in debt with no hope of ever getting free. This made them liable to arrest if they tried to leave their employers; that is, reduced them to complete slavery. So they sunk lower and lower. All travelers in Mexico during Diaz' time, no matter how much they were impressed by the surface prosperity of the country, spoke of the appalling poverty of the lower classes. A prosperity which is founded on such poverty must not and cannot endure.

It is only fair to Diaz to say that his long rule has been divided by the historians into two periods: the first, when he governed without help; the second, when, as he grew older, he came under the influence of a

DIAZ.

group of advisers, consisting of his Cabinet and the so-called *cientificos,* who were not really scientific men, as the Spanish term implies, but merely clever, unscrupulous persons, solely on the outlook for their own interests. The first part of Diaz' rule was much better than the last. At the first, the Indians loved him; at the last, they hated him. Under the influence of his advisers, his love of power grew, until it robbed his administration of even the pretense of justice.

For instance, at the beginning of Diaz' power the newspapers were in the habit of criticizing the government freely. One day, it is said, Diaz sent his police to arrest some of the most outspoken editors and shut them up in a prison intended only for the worst criminals. They were kept for a week on a diet of bread and water. Then they were summoned before the President.

"Now, gentlemen," he asked, "what do you think of my government?"

"Senor President," they replied, "we look upon it as the finest government on earth."

"Just continue to think so, gentlemen, and we shall get along splendidly."

After that there was no more trouble with the papers.

The Mexican Congress under Diaz resembled a school debating society. The members spent their time listening to minutes of the last meeting, and holding debates of a literary character. Occasionally they all

stood up and waved their hands in the air, which was their way of voting approval of one of Diaz' decrees.

In a free country like the United States the elections are always hotly contested. Does it not seem strange that in Mexico, with many millions of inhabitants, *not one vote* should be cast for any one but the President for eight successive elections? It is more than strange—it is incredible—unless the Presidential forces were in complete control of the voting booths. And such was the case. Not one real election was held during all the Diaz régime.

So it came about that in spite of the wealth and apparent prosperity and order which came to Mexico under the rule of Porfirio Diaz, there was discontent all over the land. There was discontent among the peons, toiling until they dropped in mines and plantations; there was discontent in the army, which held so many men drafted unwillingly on account of being obnoxious to the Government that it was called the "National Chain-gang"; and there was discontent among the educated people of democratic ideas, who saw that Porfirio Diaz, once a leading Liberal, had become a worse despot than the Czar of Russia. Such discontent is never repressed for long. Suddenly, towards the close of the last century, Liberal clubs began to organize. At first there was nothing political in their nature. No, indeed! They had merely organized for purposes of peaceful reform. But by and by, towards the be-

ginning of the twentieth century, it was rumored that the Liberals planned to nominate a candidate of their own at the next Presidential election. This was going too far! Their meetings, no matter how peaceful, were broken up by the police, their members imprisoned or drafted into the army. As a consequence the Liberal party disappeared; but it was not long before the Democratic party took its place.

This party, organized in 1909, adopted a program of reform, but at the same time nominated Diaz for President in the coming election. However, they named for Vice-President a different man from the Government candidate. The Government objected strongly and began oppressing the Democrats as it had the Liberals. But the feeling of the opposition had grown so deep that persecution only aroused, instead of suppressing it. Steadily the Democratic movement grew. Finally the members had the audacity to nominate their own candidate, Francisco I. Madero, for President against Diaz.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FALL OF DIAZ

In September, 1910, the City of Mexico was the scene of a celebration that will long be remembered. All the world was invited to come and see for itself the splendid condition and achievements of the country under Diaz. Trains to the capital were loaded with visitors from far and near. They found the beautiful city in its gayest dress, decked with flags, by night flaming with electric lights in red, white and green, the national colors. Every day of the month had its special events: brilliant receptions given to foreign delegates, historical pageants, military parades, band concerts in the plazas, foundings of public buildings, expositions, presentations of gifts from other nations.

In the center of everything was the tireless President, Porfirio Diaz, incredibly young for his eighty or more years, his dark eyes as piercing as ever, his bearing as erect, his manner as full of dignity. When he made a procession through the streets of the capital on the sixteenth of September in honor of the hundredth anniversary of the Grito de Dolores, he was

greeted with loud applause. Roses were showered into his carriage, and shouts of *"Viva la Republica Mexicana! Viva Don Porfirio Diaz!"* rent the air.

Two months later Madero's revolution against Diaz was in full swing! Eight months later it had swept the country and forced Diaz from the Presidency!

Who was this Francisco I. Madero who could accomplish such remarkable things? He was a small, nervous man (afflicted, it is said, with epilepsy), hitherto considered the unpractical, dreamy member of a very rich and practical family. (As a proof of this practicality, Madero's father had left an estate valued at $25,000,000 to his children.) Madero's only claim to attention, within a few months of the Revolution, was the publication of a book, called the "Presidential Succession of 1910," in which he criticized the President mildly, and urged the people to insist on their right to a fair ballot and a candidate of their own choice at the next election. This book, although soon suppressed, had much to do with forming the new Democratic party, who dared to nominate Francisco I. Madero, the author, for President, and Vasquez Gomez for Vice-President.

Government opposed this movement in the usual strong-handed way. The Democrats were thrown into prison. A little while before the election Madero was arrested on the charge, evidently invented for the occasion, of "insulting the nation," and held in the peniten-

tiary at San Luis Potosi. Another chief Democrat was similarly treated.

Election day thus came with the Democratic leaders out of the way and the members cowed and dispersed. Federal soldiers guarded all the polls. The government enjoyed another "triumph." Diaz and his chosen Vice-President, Corral, were elected "practically unanimously."

The celebration at the City of Mexico just described took place a few months after these events. It was a brilliant occasion; but the brilliancy was only a thin veneer over a very solid discontent.

Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago, who has spent years in Mexico studying the native races, has given us his impressions of how the people really felt about this fête, which cost fifteen or sixteen million Mexican dollars, that is, one dollar for every man, woman and child in the Republic.

The temper of the common people had entirely changed during his memory. There was a time, not so long before, when any procession would throw them into fits of joy. But in 1910, the gayest public events left them listless and unmoved.

"What a splendid procession!" he would exclaim, to a peon on the street.

"Yes, sir, but what result has it?"

"What a beautiful illumination!"

"Who pays for it, sir?"

"Hurrah! here comes Don Porfirio!"

"He surrounds himself with bad ministers!"

"What a magnificent building!"

"Who has grown rich out of it, sir, while the people starve?"

"What a glorious celebration of your independence!"

"Our independence is dead, sir!"

Conversations like these showed which way the wind blew better than made-to-order flag wavings and demonstrations.

Madero had been released from the penitentiary at San Luis Potosi shortly after the election. The government thought that his claws were cut and he could do no more harm. It was mistaken. Madero considered that he had been cheated out of his legal election and that he was justified in appealing to arms. Five days after he came out of prison, he issued a pamphlet entitled "The Call to Arms," which contained the "Plan of San Luis Potosi."

In this Plan he promised free suffrage, no re-election, the restoration of the land which had been taken from the Indians, the freeing of political prisoners, and other much needed reforms. Soon after, he made his way in disguise to the United States, where he purchased large quantities of arms and ammunition, and organized the rebellion from San Antonio, Texas.

On the eighteenth of November, a mass meeting which was held at Puebla to protest against the fraudulent re-

election of Diaz was broken up by the police, and in the fight which followed twenty-five people were killed. This was the first encounter of the Revolution of 1910-14. Shortly after, the revolution broke out in the north, the provinces of Chihuahua and Coahuila rising in revolt. As Madera was not by nature or training a military leader, General Orozco took charge of military operations in the north.

Diaz at first pretended to take the Revolution very lightly. Government troops were hastened to the spot under General Navarro. It was thought that the trouble would soon blow over. But somehow or other the Revolution refused to be suppressed. It was not a local outbreak. The population of the two northern provinces was behind the Revolutionists almost to a man. Many soldiers sent against them deserted to their side, which was not surprising, considering that so many Liberals had been drafted unwillingly into the National Army.

By February, Madero had a large body of well-drilled, well-armed troops in the field. Moreover, the Revolutionary fever had spread to the South, uprisings having taken place at Vera Cruz and Orizaba. Yucatan, Campeche and Guerrero became seats of rebellion, and Zapata, a noted brigand of atrocious character, was in violent eruption in the south.

In April, 1910, President Diaz saw a great light. He removed the most hated members of his cabinet and

substituted other more popular ones. He appeared before Congress and read a message in which he urged most of the reforms in the Madera platform.

These measures had only one fault. They were too late!

Even the docile Congress showed signs of becoming unruly. Its members awoke from their long sleep. They actually began to debate instead of simply voting as they were ordered. It was such a strange and novel phenomenon that people flocked to hear them. When anything was said against Diaz, there was loud applause.

At this point President Diaz requested an armistice in order to debate terms of peace with the Revolutionists. Madero said that peace could only be granted on condition that Diaz resigned, with other terms that were distasteful to the government. War began again, on May 6, 1911.

Four days afterward, the Revolutionists captured the city of Juarez, which contained a large store of rifles, rapid fire guns and ammunition. Madero would not have the prisoners slaughtered in the ordinary Mexican way. He was opposed to such cruelty.

This capture of the city of Juarez proved the decisive event of the Revolution. The Insurgents were now victorious everywhere in the north and south. The nation was apparently almost united in their favor.

The stubborn old man in the capital at last had to

bow to the will of the people. It was agreed that he should resign, and that Foreign Secretary de la Barra should be made Provisional President until the next election six months hence. A few weeks later Diaz appeared to be still hesitating. On May 24, the date on which his resignation was due in Congress, a hand-bill was passed about saying that he did not intend to resign. Indignant crowds swarmed into Congress, shouting, *"Viva Madero!"* (Long live Madero!) *"Muera Diaz!"* (Down with Diaz!) "The resignation! The resignation!"

"It will come to-morrow," shouted a member of Congress.

"No! No! To-day! Now! We demand the resignation!"

They rioted in the streets, throwing stones at the windows of *El Imparcial,* the government newspaper.

In a strongly guarded house, an old man sick with an ulcerated tooth heard the shouts of *"Viva Madero! Muera Diaz!"* and winced. It was Porfirio Diaz. The next day he resigned.

Before dawn he stole secretly out of his house and out of the city. Guarded by General Huerta, he reached Vera Cruz in safety, though his train was fired upon and several soldiers of his escort killed. In Vera Cruz he became the guest of the Pearson family, rich coal-oil magnates who had made tremendous sums in

Mexico under his régime. A few days later he sailed away from Mexico forever.

He had been a great and powerful ruler—but he had forgotten the people, from whom his power sprang—and now it was the people who exiled him. The strength of his "iron hand" was broken.

CHAPTER XXII

MADERO AND HUERTA

On the seventh of June, 1911, Madero entered the City of Mexico in triumph. Everywhere he spoke to enthusiastic crowds of peons, who hailed him as their liberator. But early on that same morning the capital had been shaken by a severe earthquake, which was taken by many for a bad omen!

Madero was not yet President. Provisional President de la Barra, formerly Ambassador to Washington, governed as per agreement until the next election, which took place on October 1, 1911. At this election the peons for the first time in the history of the country voted freely. The result was that Madero was elected President, and Jose Pino Suarez, Vice-President.

Madero's ship had not yet come into port; in fact, it was only starting out on a very rough voyage. He was an idealist, sincere in his belief that the people should own the land, but visionary and impractical in his methods of carrying it out. There was opposition to him in all quarters. The influential people who had prospered under the old régime thought his idealistic

plans for bettering the condition of the common people all nonsense; the common people were disgusted because they did not receive free lands at once, as they had expected. There were complaints also because Madero put his own friends and relatives in important posts. For instance, his brother and his uncle were in the Cabinet. The brigand Zapata, supposed at first to be fighting to help the Revolution, kept right on killing, burning and plundering in the South, although the Revolution was over. Madero did not show great firmness in putting him down, and it was whispered that he had some secret agreement with him.

No less than four attempts to overthrow the President occurred, one after another, within a short time. Orozco, the same chief who had formerly fought for Madero, now headed a revolution in the north against him. The peons knew the reason

> They say that Pascual Orozco has turned his coat
> Because Don Terrazzas seduced him;
> They gave him many millions and they bought him
> And sent him to overthrow the government.

So runs a verse from one of their ballads of the time. Terrazzas is the head of one of the great mining families. The American mining interests of that region without doubt financed the revolution against Madero. They wished everything to go on as it had under Diaz, so that they could make more money. Orozco was finally suppressed by General Huerta with his troops.

Vasquez Gomez, the defeated candidate for Vice-President, also started a revolution, but was soon defeated. The other attempts were made by Felix Diaz, a nephew of the former President, and General Reyes, the defeated candidate for President. They were suppressed, but Madero would not execute Diaz and Reyes, according to the Mexican custom, but only imprisoned them in the City of Mexico.

By February, 1913, Madero had put down four rebellions and was still President. He was confident that he could finish his term. But his hopes had a rude shock.

On the night of the eighth of February, Diaz and Reyes, whose lives Madero had spared, and who had been plotting ever since in their prison, were set free, evidently through agreement with the jailors. They put themselves at the head of troops which suddenly turned the capital into a battlefield. So began the terrible period fitly called *"La decena trágica"* ("The Tragic Ten Days)."

A force of men under General Reyes attacked the National Palace, the home of the President. Madero, warned a short time before of what was afoot, had instantly made preparations for defense. He himself took command of the troops of the National Palace and a murderous fire from machine guns poured upon the insurrectionists. General Reyes was killed and his forces repulsed. But the fighting went on under other

leaders. Desperate battles took place in the main streets of the crowded city. Shells exploded, bullets whizzed from all points at once. The Y. M. C. A. building was seized by the rebels, who directed from it a heavy fire upon the National Palace.

The many foreign residents of the city were naturally much alarmed. Those who could, left in haste, but others felt compelled to stay and look after their interests. Great anxiety was felt in the United States for the safety of the many Americans in the capital, and it was thought that we might have to intervene to prevent their slaughter, but President Taft announced that no action would be taken unless Americans were especially threatened.

Madero was urged to resign. He replied that he would die before he would give up the office to which he had been elected by the free votes of the people. He had sent for General Blanquet, sixty miles out of the city, to come to his aid at once with reinforcements. There had been some rumors about Blanquet's loyalty, but when he promptly appeared with his troops Madero's doubts were set at rest. Also there was General Huerta, whose strong right arm had put down the rebellion under Orozco. Surely he could quell this one also. Alas, Madero was depending upon snakes in the grass!

On February 18, General Blanquet and General Huerta with their troops entered the National Palace

which they were supposed to defend, and arrested Madero. In all probability they had been in sympathy with the insurgents from the first and had only been biding their time to declare themselves in their true colors.

When Madero found himself surrounded by his enemies, he turned to Huerta and exclaimed,

"Kill me, my General! I will die President of Mexico!"

Huerta refused. He arrested him and the Vice-President, Suarez, confining them in the Palace. That same afternoon Gustave Madero, the President's brother, a member of Madero's Cabinet, was arrested, and soon shot. Two days after, the parties in power, Diaz, Blanquet and Huerta, called Congress into extraordinary session. The members, knowing what was good for them, made Huerta Provisional President.

All these things could be accomplished with the help of the Government army, because it was accustomed to obey Huerta under the Diaz régime. Indeed, the ignorant soldiers hardly cared which party was in power. A story is told of some soldiers who were standing outside one of the legations during the Diaz-Madero conflict.

"From what side are you protecting us?" a member of the legation inquired. "Are you for Diaz or Madero?"

"Pues, senor," they replied, "our officer will be back soon, and then we shall know."

On the night of the twenty-second the two distinguished prisoners were taken from the National Palace under close guard, supposedly to be transferred to the Penitentiary. There is a rumor current in Mexico that it was not two men, but their dead bodies, which were taken from the Palace that night. At any rate, Madero and Suarez never reached the Penitentiary alive. On the way there some confusion arose in the street and shots were fired. When the smoke had cleared away, Madero and Suarez were dead.

The peons of the Revolution sing a ballad around their camp fires which hints at an even darker tragedy. As quoted by the traveler, John Reed, it runs like this:

In Nineteen hundred and ten
Madero was imprisoned
In the National Palace
The eighteenth of February.

Four days he was imprisoned
In the Hall of the Intendancy
Because he did not wish
To renounce the Presidency.

Then Blanquet and Felix Diaz
Martyred him there.
They were the hangmen
Feeding on his hate.

They crushed
Until he fainted,
With play of cruelty
To make him resign.

Then with hot irons
They burned him without mercy,
And only unconsciousness
Calmed the awful flames.

But it was all in vain,
Because his mighty courage
Preferred rather to die;
His was a great heart!

This was the end of the life
Of him who was the redeemer
Of the Indian Republic,
And of all the poor.

They took him out of the Palace,
And tell us he was killed in an assault.
What a cynicism!
What a shameless lie!

O Street of Lecumberri,
Your cheerfulness has ended forever,
For through you passed Madero
To the Penitentiary.

That twenty-second of February
Will always be remembered in the Indian Republic.
God has pardoned him,
And the Virgin of Guadalupe.

MADERO AND HUERTA

Good-by, Beautiful Mexico,
Where our leader died.
Good-by to the palace
Whence he issued a living corpse.

Senores, there is nothing eternal,
Nor anything sincere in life.
See what happened
To Don Francisco I. Madero!

CHAPTER XXIII

CARRANZA AND VILLA

The man who had overthrown Madero, and who was considered by nearly every one responsible for his death, was an Indian of nearly pure Aztec blood, who had received an education at Chapultepec, the Mexican West Point, and had served in a scientific capacity on the General Staff of the army under Diaz. He had been a personal friend of Diaz, and in every way an upholder of the old order. "An able, crafty, half-educated savage, hiding in his breast the fierce hunger of ambition," as an editor of Mexico City has described him. He soon secured himself the office of Provisional President, and employed all the sledge-hammer methods characteristic of Diaz to increase his power. Soon after his forced election, his soldiers drove most of the members of Congress from their hall at the point of the bayonet, and imprisoned them for speaking against the administration.

Huerta needed all the force he could command, for the power he had usurped was instantly threatened by a new party, calling themselves the Constitutionalists,

as opposed to the Huertistas or Federals. There were several chiefs conspicuous in this movement, but the principal one, and the one destined to endure, was Venustiano Carranza.

When Madero was making his triumphal progress towards the City of Mexico in 1910, he addressed the people from the balcony of the Governor's palace in Chihuahua.

"As he told of the hardships endured and the sacrifices made by the little band of men who had overthrown the dictatorship of Diaz forever," says a magazine correspondent, "he was overcome with emotion. Reaching inside the room, he pulled out a tall, bearded man of commanding presence, and, throwing his arm about his shoulder, he said, in a voice choked with tears,

"'This is a good man! Love and honor him always.'"

This man was Carranza. He was a rich landowner, the descendant of an old Spanish family. He had been a senator from the state of Coahuila for ten or fifteen years under Diaz; during that time he was a dignified cipher, never speaking either for or against a measure, hiding his disapproval of the Diaz régime under a stolid manner. Madero had made him Governor of Coahuila. When he heard of Madero's downfall and death he threw aside his stolidity and hastened to raise the standard of revolt in the north. The peons flocked around him, influenced partly by the hereditary respect they

felt towards him as a great haciendado, and partly by their own desire for rebellion. The revolt soon spread to Sonora, Chihuahua, Nueva Leon and Tamaulipas.

Carranza is a tall, clumsy, silent man, a mystery to the Mexicans closest to him as well as to foreigners. He was well past middle age when he began his revolution, is not distinguished in a military way, but possesses apparently an immense amount of determination and patience. An odd feature of his personality is, that despite his age and silent disposition, he is very fond of banquets and balls, and is accused of spending too much of his time in junketing about the country.

One of Carranza's chief military leaders was Obregon, who operated in the Sonora region; the other was Villa, who brought Chihuahua under control. Francisco, or "Pancho," Villa is the comic character of the Revolution, the "jolliest cutthroat in all the land," Hubert Bancroft calls him. He was for a while the favorite topic with the American newspapers, who never tired of publishing his exploits, real or imaginary, but now he is nearly forgotten, the hero of a tale that is told. However, he has been the cause of disturbance enough to be entitled to his page in history. He was a bandit while Diaz was in power—the Mexican Robin Hood, who rustled cattle from the great Terrazzas estates in Chihuahua, held up travelers, and then often shared his spoils with the poverty-stricken peons. The story goes that he was driven to a bandit life through

having been outlawed as a young man on account of shooting a man who had injured his sister. Whether or not this was true, the Robin Hood life must have suited his temperament very well. Songs which the peons sing around their campfires of an evening celebrate many of his exploits. Once, they say, when he was an outlaw with a price of $10,000 on his head, he sent word that he was coming into Chihuahua on a certain day to kill a follower who had tried to betray him. On the appointed date, he rode into the city in broad daylight, ate ice-cream in the Plaza, strolled leisurely about the streets until he met the man he was looking for, shot him dead, and escaped. Such stories make one wish that there was a Bret Harte in Mexico! He was in fact a clever and daring rascal, the only man in Mexico who defied Diaz' *rurales* for many years. He fought more than eighty battles with them, but always escaped.

At the beginning of Madero's revolt, Villa found an outlet for his abundant energies in joining the Revolutionists, and quickly developed great military skill. When Madero became President, he made him a leader of rurales, and set him to catching bandits. While Huerta was acting for Madero in the north of Mexico he declared Villa guilty of insubordination and ordered him to be shot. Madero heard of the sentence in time to save Villa's life. Villa naturally thereafter hated Huerta, and hastened to join in the revolt against him.

It is said that he set out from El Paso in April, 1913, to conquer Mexico, with four companions, three led horses, two pounds of sugar and coffee, and a pound of salt! In a month he had raised an army of three thousand men, and in two months was driving out the Federal garrisons all over the south of Chihuahua.

During the spring and summer of 1913, the Constitutionalists kept the Federals on the run in northern Mexico and soon had control of all that part of the country. Meanwhile the brigand Zapata still continued to ravage the south, and the Indians of Puebla and Vera Cruz rose in revolt.

The United States refused from the first to recognize Huerta, since he was plainly a usurper who had overthrown by force the legal government of the country. President Wilson recalled our Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, from the City of Mexico, but during the summer of 1913, sent his personal representative, ex-Governor Lind of Minnesota, to ask Huerta to resign and not come up for re-election. Huerta obstinately refused. It was evident, however, that the days of his power were numbered. As President Wilson pointed out, in his First Annual Message to Congress, December 2, 1913:

"Little by little Huerta has been completely isolated. By a little every day his power and prestige are crumbling, and the collapse is not far away. We shall not,

I believe, be obliged to alter our policy of watchful waiting."

The phrase contained in the last two words instantly became famous. Those who had interests in Mexico and selfishly wished the "strongest man" to be recognized at once, regardless of the rights of the case, were irritated by it. Criticism and ridicule of the President were freely expressed—all to no effect. Quietly, Wilson steered his course between the whirlpool of open war on the one hand and the rock of recognition of Huerta on the other. In acknowledgment of the dangers of the situation, however, he urged all Americans in Mexico to leave the country. Many did so, but others who had made it their home for years, and to whom banishment meant beggary, decided to stay. Huerta is credited, at least, with doing everything in his power to protect the Americans from injury.

Although Huerta's government had been recognized by England, France and Germany, the foreign financiers would not lend it money as long as the United States refused its recogition. Huerta began to lack "the sinews of war."

Mexico in the winter of 1914, says Edward I. Bell, in the "Political Shame of Mexico," may be considered as consisting of two nations, the one over which Huerta ruled, and the one in which Carranza was the reigning prince and Pancho Villa the military genius. Under ordinary conditions, Huerta's part was much richer and

more powerful than the barren northern country of the Revolutionists; but with foreign loans cut off, the financial system became demoralized, business was at a standstill, and there was nothing to buy arms and ammunition for the army.

As Huerta still did not resign, in February, 1914, President Wilson lifted the embargo on shipping arms and ammunition to Mexico which had been in force for nearly two years, thus enabling the Constitutionalists to receive all they wanted from our side of the border.

Two months afterward occurred the "insult to the flag" at Tampico, which showed the irritation of the Huerta party against the United States, though Huerta himself was probably not responsible for it.

On April 9, 1914, some sailors from a United States gunboat, flying the American flag, who had landed at Tampico for gasoline, were arrested by a Federal general and paraded under guard through the streets amid the jeering populace. Admiral Mayo at once sent a demand to General Zarapoza, in command of the Mexican forces at Tampico, for "formal disavowal and apology for the act," also a salute of twenty-one guns to the United States flag, within twenty-four hours.

General Zaragoza released the men, and Huerta sent an apology to Nelson O'Shaughnessy, the American Chargé d'Affaires in the capital. But he refused to order the salute.

President Wilson and the Cabinet at Washington

backed up Admiral Mayo in his demands. All the available battleships of the Atlantic fleet were ordered to Tampico. The time limit for the salute was extended to ten days. This time limit passed, without the salute's being fired. As a consequence, on the morning of April 21, a force of United States marines and sailors, under command of Admiral Fletcher, took possession of the Vera Cruz customs house, having received orders to that effect from Washington. In the action four Americans were killed and twenty wounded, while the Mexicans lost over one hundred.

On the same day our forces, amounting to 5,250 men, took possession of the city, which was shelled by our battleships. Hostile relations went on for three days. The Americans lost sixteen killed and seventy wounded, the Mexicans 126 killed and 321 wounded. At the end of that time the Americans were in complete control. General Funston's brigade from Galveston soon arrived, the command on land was transferred to him, and a fine exhibition of order, government and sanitary efficiency was given by the American troops. The municipal government of the city was reëstablished, the Vera Cruz people soon lost their fear of the invaders, and business and pleasure went on almost as usual. One of the first acts of the Americans was to tackle the horrible old prison of San Juan de Ulua on the Isle de Sacrificios, and release the political prisoners who were rotting there in the dungeons under sea-level,

many of whom had even forgotten their own names, while the world had long since forgotten their existence, much less their crimes. Indeed, three hundred and twenty-five were found with no crime whatever charged against them. These were of course released.

On April 25, came an offer from the three great South American powers, Argentine, Brazil and Chili, to mediate between the United States and the Huerta government. This offer, which seemed to open a way out of the deadlock, was accepted. The "A-B-C Conference," as it was called, met in May at Niagara Falls, and consisted of two men chosen by the United States, three by President Huerta, and the South American diplomats. Their debates had no practical result, but the whole situation was soon cleared by Huerta's resignation. Feeling that his usurped position had become absolutely untenable, the crafty Aztec general quietly left the capital in July, 1914.

Some time later he took up his residence with his family on Long Island, New York. At that time New York was full of exiled Mexicans, and the existence there of a junta which was planning to restore Huerta was practically certain. Huerta was closely watched by the United States Secret Service. He lived on Long Island till June 24, 1915, when he left for the purpose, he declared, of visiting his daughter in Texas. But the authorities did not trust him so near the border, and he was arrested on the charge of organizing a mili-

Cathedral of Mexico,
Mexico City.

tary expedition to Mexico, and jailed in the military prison at Fort Bliss. He did not long survive this final failure of his schemes, but died in January, 1916.

The Constitutionalist Revolution, meanwhile, made great headway, and Carranza's forces, having gained control of all the north, entered the City of Mexico in August, 1914, seventeen months after he had begun his struggle. This marked the end of the first period of the Revolution; the second, when the various Constitutionalist chiefs struggled for supremacy among themselves, was to last some years longer. Villa quarreled with Carranza even before Huerta left; in October, 1914, he was at open war, being jealous because in that month Carranza was formally recognized as Provisional President by the United States and eight of the Republics of South and Central America.

The little border town of Columbus, New Mexico, one dark night in March, 1916, was aroused from its slumbers by a sudden uproar. Villa's bandits, probably led by Villa himself, were shooting up the town. During the raid they killed 17 Americans, civilians and soldiers. So did the relapsed rebel and outlaw pay off his spite against the United States for recognizing his rival, Carranza, and also make things uncomfortable for Carranza by giving the United States a cause for the invasion of Mexico.

President Wilson and the Cabinet quickly decided to send a force into Mexico to punish Villa. The expe-

dition entered Mexico on March 19, and 12,000 American soldiers under General Pershing pursued the bandits for six weeks through the barren stretches of the north. Carranza was supposed to consent to the invasion, but in April, a month after the Americans had entered, a small force of United States soldiers was attacked by his men. This led to the dispatch of heavy reinforcements to General Pershing and the general contraction of the American lines. The pursuit of Villa was virtually abandoned, but our troops were still kept in the country. On May 31, the United States government received a note from Carranza stating that the Pershing expedition had gone into Mexico without Carranza's consent, and asking for the immediate withdrawal of the American troops in Mexican territory. On June 16, Carranza's representative, General Trevino, informed General Pershing that if the American troops moved in any direction but northward it would be considered a hostile act.

President Wilson responded by calling out practically the entire organized militia of the various states!

Thus took place the exodus of 148,000 stalwart young Americans from the office, the farm, the factory, or the pleasant loafing of a college vacation, to the hot, sandy stretches of the border.

President Wilson informed Carranza that he refused to withdraw the American troops, and that any attempt

to expel the American troops by force would be followed by "the gravest consequences."

Then occurred the battle at Carrizal, Chihuahua, where Pershing's soldiers were ambushed by Carranzistas and a score of them killed. The responsibility for this affair has never been fully fixed. Secretary Lane called the explanatory statement submitted by the Mexican government "a formal avowal of a deliberately hostile action."

Soon after, President Wilson accepted Carranza's offer for a joint commission to confer regarding the withdrawal of American troops and the origin of bandit raids. This commission met in September and continued in session till November, when it drew up a protocol. Carranza found this unsatisfactory and refused to sign it.

The Pershing forces were gradually withdrawn from Mexico during the winter of 1917, the National Guard having returned to their homes by detachments during the fall. Though the expedition had not succeeded in capturing Villa, it showed that the United States was ready and able to protect its border against his or similar depredations; it also served as a preparation of our military forces for a far more harrowing issue. The boys who gallantly played at war with Mexico are fighting and dying to-day on the battlefields of Europe, and in that grim reality the expedition to the Mexican border seems almost like a dream.

Though Villa escaped capture by the Americans, he was soon defeated by Carranza and his faction under the leadership of General Obregon. With surprising suddenness he faded out of the American newspapers of which he had been a star feature. For a year or more his whereabouts and even existence were in doubt. In the fall of 1917, says a correspondent of one of our papers, he reappeared wearing a patriarchal black beard and mounted on a white mule. He attacked the Mexican town of Ojinaga with a small force, and defeated the Carranzista troops, but the victory was unimportant. And so he disappears from our history, picturesque to the last, as are most of the Mexican heroes, but very far from being a great man.

In the winter of 1917, Mexico was in an apparently hopeless condition. Villa was operating in the north, Zapata controlling the State of Morelos, south of the capital, the followers of Felix Diaz were dominant in Oaxaca, Porfirio Diaz' native state—and one Manuel Palez was conducting an insurrection of his own along the east coast. Mexico was bankrupt, since no financiers would lend the Carranza government money under such disturbed conditions.

Carranza, nevertheless, slowly but surely gained strength, and began to show signs of establishing a democratic and truly representative government in the face of all this chaos.

As early as the fall of 1916, reports reached an

incredulous world that elections had been held in Mexico to choose delegates to meet in convention at Queretaro to revise the Mexican Constitution. The other nations smiled. This eternal preoccupation of Mexico with its Constitution when the wildest anarchy ruled all over the land seemed like a man mortally ill worrying over a sanitary code, or the crew of a ship which was pounding against the rocks studying the laws of navigation.

However, in February, 1917, the new Constitution was passed; and foreigners heard with indignation that under its provisions they would not be allowed to hold property in localities where they might furnish excuse for foreign intervention—i. e., within a certain distance from the seacoast and the border—also that mine holdings would be arranged to contribute rather to Mexican than foreign wealth—that large landed estates were to be broken up and parceled out in small farms—oil deposits were to be the property of the nation, to be developed only on payment of royalties to the Government instead of as before to owners of land covering the deposits—in fact, that Mexico was henceforth to be for the Mexicans, and the glad, grabbing days of the Diaz era were over forever.

The other provisions of the new Constitution are just as radical, and planned with one purpose—to effect the welfare of Mexico's hitherto "submerged" classes. They embody the very newest social reforms, which in

other countries have only been attempted, if attempted at all, in experimental legislation, but in Mexico are now the paving-stones in the governmental platform. The eight-hour day, the minimum wage, profit-sharing in industry, and other such measures are carefully provided for. Nations who consider themselves advanced can afford to watch Mexico with interest. She has been called the undeveloped among nations, but it sometimes happens that "a little child shall lead them."

The laws of the new Constitution in regard to religion are practically the same as the Reform Laws of Juarez, but are more strictly enforced. Under Diaz the Catholics had been slowly but surely regaining wealth and power. These are now gone. One new provision is "that only Mexicans by birth may be ministers of any religious creed in Mexico;" this is aimed at the foreign priests who have often made mischief in the country. It is of course also resented by Protestants who wish to send missionaries there. Religious instruction is absolutely forbidden in the schools.

In March, 1917, a national election was held, and Venustiano Carranza, commander-in-chief and acting executive of the Constitutionalist movement, was elected President of the Republic. Members of Congress were also elected who were not mere figure-heads, but intelligent and public-spirited men. Though the country was not yet pacified, elections were held in the

states whenever possible, and governors chosen in sympathy with the new movement.

An example of what a State Governor of the new kind can accomplish is shown in Yucatan, which, under Diaz, was one of the most conspicuous of the national scandals. The land all belonged to a few rich men, and the natives were slaves whose lives were devoted to the production of hennequen hemp, a fiber for binder twine.

The present Governor of Yucatan, Salvador Alvarado, insists that laborers shall be free to make their own agreements to work as they please, has established a minimum wage, organized a board of control to regulate prices and distribution, and taken up with great zeal the matter of public education. There are now at least five times as many school-teachers as soldiers in Yucatan—a great change from former days. A School City modeled on Booker Washington's Tuskegee Institute is training native leaders for the Maya Indians, hitherto isolated and uncivilized and at war with the government, which seemed bent upon exterminating them. This school is very popular and will bring about a great change in the condition of this people.

The regeneration of Mexico as a whole is not of course an affair of a few months or a few years. A larger intelligent middle class is greatly needed to take advantage of the improved business and social conditions. The upper classes have been too rich, and the

peons too poor, for a progressive spirit to rule. It is not strange, considering their long years of oppression, that the peons lack initiative. A keen observer of Mexican affairs, Charles Flandrau, suggests another very possible reason for their lack of energy. "No people whose diet consists chiefly of tortillas, chile, black coffee and cigarettes are ever going to be lashed by the desire to accomplish. This is the diet of babies as soon as they are weaned. I have heard proud mothers at country dances compare notes.

" 'My little boy'—aged three—'won't look at a tortilla unless it is covered with chile," one of them explains.

" 'Does he cry for coffee?' inquires another. 'My baby'—aged two and a half—'screams and cries unless we give her coffee three and four times a day.'

"It is not surprising that a population perpetually in the throes of intestinal disorder should be somewhat lacking in energy."

Neither is it surprising that a people of whom only an extremely small proportion have been educated should be lacking in progressiveness. The Carranza government is intensely interested in education and is establishing it on a scale much greater than ever before known in the country. When Carranza was winning his way but slowly, and the Constitutionalist government ruled only a small portion of the country, when the money to buy supplies for the army was exceedingly

scanty, Carranza nevertheless sent several hundred teachers on a trip to the United States to investigate the best methods of education for a democracy.

The date of the close of this history, then, sees the beginning of the true dawn of Mexican progress. Her night has been long. Of all modern nations, she had perhaps the most to suffer not only from oppression and exploitation from without, but from conflicting impulses within. Those who should have helped her to stand upright have been the most ready to lay heavy burdens upon her back; those who have risen to defend her have been swayed by vanity and treachery. Her wars, carried on from beginning to end with that extreme ferocity which is a legacy from the Spaniards as well as a characteristic of the native races of Mexico, have robbed her population of its best blood to an alarming degree. Yet, in times of greatest need, there have arisen national heroes of unsullied reputation, from Guatemozin, the undaunted defender of Tenochtitlan, to Juarez, the steadfast Indian president. More and more it appears that the men now in power are of the latter type; that they sincerely love their country, and that they are planning its welfare with a disinterestedness far above the average in statesmanship. The civil wars were like the fires which in tropical countries are necessary to clear the ground of obstructions; already a new growth of free institutions flourishing amid healthy conditions is visible.

The greatest boon that Mexico can ask of her sister nations is this: that they shall know something of the conflicts that have made her what she is; that they shall see something of the ideals towards which she is so painfully struggling. With such knowledge and such vision, sympathy for her is inevitable; and with sympathy substituted for selfishness, Mexico will be able to work out her destiny in her own way, to the ultimate satisfaction of herself and the world.

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